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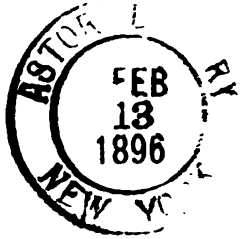

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IRISH POETRY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY D. J. O'DONOGHUE.

[Read January 24th, 1894.]

PERHAPS the most accurate title I could give this paper would be "Irish poetry of the nineteenth century: a sketch of its history, with illustrative examples." There seem to be two ways of treating the subject: one to assume that you are well acquainted with our poets and their writings, and to simply analyse them exhaustively; the other way, and the best one under the circumstances, as I think, is to take it that you are not familiar with the Irish poets, have probably never heard of the names of some of them, and would like to have some specimens of their writings, as well as some criticism. The subject is a very large one, and I propose to pass in review only those writers who have produced something worth remembering. I shall be forced to ignore altogether, from lack of time, some excellent singers, and must barely name others, as I wish to practically survey the whole ground. Irishmen are proverbially clever at verse-making, and it is rarely we meet one who has not at least attempted the feat. More often than is supposed they have succeeded in their poetical efforts, and we have even a great poet or two. It

will not do for English critics to complacently examine Moore's claims, and having satisfied themselves that he is not a great poet, blandly proceed to the conclusion that Ireland has never produced one. Few Irishmen nowadays look upon Moore as their greatest poet, or as a great poet; but the Irishman who has the most exaggerated opinion of his merits is surely as safe a guide as the well-known English critic who has recorded his opinion that Moore was hardly a poet at all. Without entering upon the unprofitable discussion as to *why* Ireland is merely "the mother of sweet singers," as Pope calls her, and not something more than she is in the world of literature, I may perhaps express wonder that poetry was cultivated at all in days when, in O'Hagan's words,

"Crouching 'neath the sheltering hedge, or stretched on mountain fern,
The teacher and his pupils met, feloniously, to learn."

Irish poetry is almost wholly lyrical, and we have a ballad and song literature of surpassing beauty, which, if somewhat of a sameness, only reflects in that the monotony of our history. It is wonderfully melodious, and in the highest degree emotional. Much of this emotion will appeal to Irish readers only, but its melody will captivate all ears. Of satirical verse we have any quantity, but of the didactic kind we have very little or none at all, and didactic poetry at its worst is happily absent. Our literature offers something more virile and moving. The Celt loves excitement, and in a collection of Irish ballads he generally gets plenty of it. There is also a deal of rhetoric in them, more than is

good, but at least it prevents us going to sleep. Our historical ballads are among the finest ever written, and our love songs I cannot but think unequalled. Naturally the Saxon is not spared, but what Englishman will feel annoyed when he is railed at so eloquently? There is no doubt whatever that political feeling enters too largely into our literature, and from an artistic point of view alone prevents it obtaining the position its intrinsic merit entitles it to. It is impossible to overlook this political flavour, and Irish poets have even made the mistake of introducing political allusions where they have no right to be. Love lyrics are not improved by such allusions, no matter how natural the error may seem in view of the persecution of the bards. Of true and dignified national feeling there can hardly be too much; it is one of the undying charms of Irish verse. But in its exaggerated form it makes a literature merely local, and ours will remain local unless our poets recognise the danger. But there is a human interest in our poetry which should make it known to the world, and a tenderness which cannot fail to touch the heart.

The first noticeable thing about the Irish poetry of this century is that it participated to the full in the wholesome change which came over popular taste with the rise of the natural school. With few exceptions, only those Irish writers using the native tongue were in the eighteenth century able to speak naturally. The rest followed the English manner at its worst, and are unendurable. There is nothing in them to characterise them as Irish poets. Among

the few song writers who kept aloof from 1
deadly eighteenth century influence may be count
Arthur Dawson, John Philpot Curran, Lysaght, a
Milliken in their more jovial effusions, Geor
Nugent Reynolds in his "Kathleen O'More," wh
Drennan and James Orr showed something
the native emotion. Others could not get awa
from the baneful style, notably George Ogle.
think his "Molly Astore," and "Shepherds, I hav
lost my love," are good songs, but the artificia
prevails in them. The first verse of "Moll
Astore" is less English than the rest, yet its refrai
is the only thing Irish about it:

> "As down by Banna's banks I strayed
> One evening in May,
> The little birds, with blithest notes,
> Made vocal every spray.
> They sang their little notes of love,
> They sang them o'er and o'er:
> Ah! *gramachree, mo cailin oge,*
> *Mo Mailligh mo store!*"

It is marked with the indelible eighteenth century stamp, a stamp which you will remember has completely spoilt many of Burns' songs. Both Irish and English literature can do without such imitations, and the Irish poem which is not national in the best sense runs the risk of being unacceptable to either. Miss Charlotte Brooke deserves credit for her good intention in attempting to interest English readers in Gaelic poetry by her translations, but her versions are painful reading nevertheless. Luke Aylmer Conolly's graceful lyric, "To Rathlin's isle I chanced to sail," is the earliest satisfac-

tory Irish poem produced this century. I do not propose to dwell upon Moore's poetry—Mr. Graves not long ago dealt with his poems in this very hall, —but it is sometimes necessary to say that there were Irish poets before him, and have been others since. What is quite certain is that he has been deposed from the position he once held in Irish literature. In real essential poetic quality he has been outdone by later Irish poets, though some of his best songs still remain unequalled for felicitous phrasing.

It was Lady Morgan's small collection of Irish songs with music which prompted Moore to commence the publication of his "Melodies," and a poetess who deserves greater praise than Lady Morgan, even though she followed Moore, is Miss Balfour, an Ulster lady, whose modest little volume, published in 1810, includes some truly tender strains. But the first really distinctive Irish poet of this century is, beyond doubt, Jeremiah (not James) Joseph Callanan, a Cork man, who died at an early age in 1829. He wrote at first lengthy poems of an unsatisfying kind, but when his Byronic fever had abated he gave us some of the best Irish songs we have. He saw that his imitations of Byron would not do, and recognised the necessity of reviving the old simplicity. In his most popular lyric, that beginning "There is a green island in lone Gougane Barra," he apostrophises the native singers, and gives expression to his desire to emulate them:

"Least bard of the hills! were it mine to inherit
The fire of thy harp and the wing of thy spirit,

With the wrongs which, like thee, to my country ha
bound me—
Did your mantle of song fling its radiance around me;
Still, still in these wilds might young Liberty rally,
And send her strong shout over mountain and valley.
The star of the west might yet rise in its glory,
And the land that was darkest be brightest in story."

In his adaptations from the Irish we get the tru Irish manner. Some of these poems are highl poetical, particularly his "Outlaw of Loch Lene."

THE OUTLAW OF LOCH LENE.

"O many a day have I made good ale in the glen,
That came not of stream or of malt like the brewing of men.
My bed was the ground, my roof the greenwood above,
And the wealth that I sought one far kind glance from my love.

"Alas, on that night when the horses I drove from the field,
That I was not near from terror my angel to shield!
She stretched forth her arms, her mantle she flung to the wind,
And swam o'er Loch Lene her outlawed lover to find.

"O would that a freezing sleet-winged tempest did sweep,
And I and my love were alone, far off on the deep!
I'd ask not a ship, or a bark, or a pinnace, to save,—
With her hand round my waist I'd fear not the wind or the wave.

"'Tis down by the lake, where the wild tree fringes its sides,
The maid of my heart, my fair one of heaven, resides:
I think as at eve she wanders its mazes along,
The birds go to sleep by the sweet wild twist of her song."

Between the commencement of the "Irish Melo-

dies" and the appearance of Callanan there were several writers of alleged Irish songs, such as—to mention only two—H. B. Code, author of "The Sprig of Shillelah," and Charles O'Flaherty, author of "The Humours of Donnybrook Fair;" but the less said of these the better. I will pass over the poets who are considered, rightly or wrongly, to be English, men like George Darley, Sir Aubrey de Vere, Dr. Croly, Charles Wolfe, and Dr. Anster. I could hardly be said to describe Irish poetry in dilating upon their works, admirable though some of them are, and Irish as the authors were. I come instead to Gerald Griffin and John Banim, who began to be known as poets and novelists about the time Callanan was leaving Ireland. Both were possessed of lyrical power, especially Griffin, and both had the Irish tenderness. Griffin has left us some excellent love songs, like "Gille Machree," "Eileen Aroon," and "My Mary of the curling hair;" and to Banim we owe that most touching poem of "Soggarth Aroon:" these are among the most popular of Irish lyrics. I have said that political feeling is to be found in most Irish poets; and even Banim, who was anything but a politician, was capable of it, as is seen in his fiery denunciation of a famous personage who was considered to have abjured his nationality. Banim's other poems are not at all noteworthy, "Soggarth Aroon" being the only one which will live. It is in most collections of Irish verse.

In 1831 appeared a publication which undoubtedly had a great effect on Irish poetry. I refer to Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy," a collection of translations from the Gaelic by Thomas Furlong,

Henry Grattan Curran, and others. The versions are often tame, but the work was hailed with approval by many Irish poets, who were eager to infuse the old spirit and style into English verse. Furlong was a young Wexford man, who previous to his premature death had shown great satirical power. His translations from the Irish are very bald beside those of Mangan, who at this time was a very poor scrivener, simply known as the author of quaint and curious rhymes in the almanacks. His fascinating paraphrase of "Roisin Dubh" should be compared with the version by Furlong, and Mangan's peculiar genius will be apparent.

But to return to Hardiman's "Irish Minstrelsy." It was reviewed and welcomed in the *Dublin University Magazine* by Samuel Ferguson, a young Belfast man, who introduced into the review a poem by a friend and fellow-townsman of his named George Fox. This poem, an admirable one, is entitled "The County of Mayo." It is a great pity Fox did not give us more versions from the Irish like it.

THE COUNTY OF MAYO.

"On the deck of Patrick Lynch's boat I sit in woeful plight,
Through my sighing all the weary day and weeping all the night;
Were it not that full of sorrow from my people forth I go,
By the blessed sun! 'tis royally I'd sing thy praise, Mayo!

"When I dwelt at home in plenty, and the gold did much abound,
In the company of fair young maids the Spanish ale went round;

'Tis a bitter change from those gay days that now I'm forced to go,
And must leave my bones in Santa Cruz, far from my own Mayo.

"They are altered girls in Irrul now—'tis proud they're grown and high,
With their hair-bags and their top-knots, for I pass their buckles by;
But it's little now I heed their airs, for God will have it so
That I must depart for foreign lands, and leave my sweet Mayo.

"'Tis my grief that Patrick Loughlin is not Earl of Irrul still,
And that Brian Duff no longer rules as lord upon the hill,
And that Colonel Hugh Macgrady should be lying dead and low,
And I sailing—sailing swiftly from the county of Mayo."

Time will not permit me to speak of the unfortunate career of James Clarence Mangan, who spent the latter part of it in destitution, living in underground cellars, and slowly undermining his health by his fatal love of liquor. He was the son of a Dublin grocer, who became a bankrupt and soon after died, leaving James, the eldest son, almost the sole support of a large family. Poor Mangan made a struggle for a time, but abandoned it finally, and lived nobody knew how. He made the most marvellous translations from German and other languages for the *Comet* and other publications, and was rescued from misery for a time by Dr. Petrie and other Irish scholars, who, recognising his unique talents, gave him literal translations from the Irish to versify. He knew several lan-

guages, but not Irish; and it may be noted here that all his so-called translations from the Turkish, Coptic, Arabic, and Persian were so many original poems. His versions from the Irish, too, are generally very free renderings. I must mention his inimitable "Lament for the Death of Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, Knight of Kerry," and his still more wonderful "O'Hussey's Ode to the Maguire," as examples of his skill. He never condenses—Ferguson always does.

Here are Mangan and Ferguson's versions of "The Fair Hills of Ireland:"

THE FAIR HILLS OF EIRE O (from the Irish by Mangan).

"Take a blessing from my heart to the land of my birth,
And to all that yet survive of Eibhear's tribe on earth.
In that land so delightful the wild thrush's lay
Seems to pour a lament forth for Eire's decay.
Alas! alas! why pine I a thousand miles away
From the fair hills of Eire O?

"The soil is rich and soft, the air is mild and bland;
Here barest rock is greener to me than this rude land.
Her woods are tall and straight, grove rising over grove;
Trees flourish in her glens below, and on her heights above.
O in heart and in soul, I shall ever, ever love
The fair hills of Eire O.

"A noble tribe, moreover, are the now hapless Gael—
A tribe in battle's hour unused to shrink or fail.
For this is my lament, in bitterness outpoured,
To see them slain or scattered by the Saxon sword;
O woe of woes, to see a foreign spoiler horde
On the fair hills of Eire O!

"Broad and tall rise the Cruachs in the golden morning's glow,
O'er her smooth grass for ever sweet cream and honey flow;
Oh, I long, I am pining again to behold
The land that belongs to the brave Gael of old!
For dearer to my heart than a gift of gems or gold
Are the fair hills of Eire O.

"The dewdrops lie bright 'mid the grass and yellow corn,
The sweet-scented apples blush redly in the morn,
The watercress and sorrel fill the vales below,
The streamlets are hushed till the evening breezes blow,
While the waves of the Suir—noble river—ever flow
Near the fair hills of Eire O.

"A fruitful clime is Eire's, through valley, meadow, plain,
The very bread of life is in the yellow grain;
Far dearer unto me than the tones music yields
Is the lowing of the kine and the calves in her fields,
And the sunlight that shone long ago on the shields
Of the Gaels on the fair hills of Eire O."

The Fair Hills of Ireland (by Ferguson).

"A plenteous place is Ireland for hospitable cheer,
Where the wholesome fruit is bursting from the yellow barley ear;
There is honey in the trees where her misty vales expand,
And her forest paths in summer are by falling waters fanned;
There is dew at high noontide there, and springs i' the yellow sand
On the fair hills of holy Ireland.

"Curled he is, and ringletted, and plaited to the knee,
Each captain who comes sailing across the Irish Sea

And I will make my journey, if life and health b
stand,
Unto that pleasant country—that fresh and fragra
strand,
And leave your boasted braveries, your wealth and hig
command,
For the fair hills of holy Ireland.

"Large and profitable are the stacks upon the ground;
The butter and the cream do wondrously abound;
The cresses on the water and the sorrels are at hand,
And the cuckoo calling daily his note of music bland,
And the bold thrush sings so bravely his song i' the
forests grand,
On the fair hills of holy Ireland."

Here is another poem by Mangan, very skilfully paraphrased from the original:

A Lamentation for the Death of the Knight of Kerry.

"There was lifted up one voice of woe—
One lament of more than mortal grief—
Through the wide south to and fro
For a fallen chief.
In the dead of night that cry thrilled through me,
I looked out upon the midnight air;
Mine own soul was all as gloomy,
And I knelt in prayer.

"O'er Loch Gur that night—once, twice, yea thrice—
Passed a wail of anguish for the Brave
That half curdled into ice
Its moon-mirroring wave.
Then uprose a many-toned wild hymn in
Choral swell from Ogra's dark ravine;
And Mogeely's 'Phantom Women'
Mourned the Geraldine!

Far on Carah Mona's emerald plains
  Shrieks and sighs were blended many hours;
And Fermoy in fitful strains
      Answered from her towers.
Youghal, Keenalmeaky, Eemokilly,
  Mourned in concert; and their piercing keen
Woke to wondering life the stilly
      Glens of Inchiqueen.

"From Lough Moe to yellow Dunanore
  There was fear; the traders of Tralee
Gathered up their golden store
      And prepared to flee.
For, in ship and hall, from night till morning,
  Showed the first faint beamings of the sun;
All the foreigners heard the warning
      Of the dreaded *One!*

"'This,' they spake, 'portendeth death to *us*
  If we fly not swiftly from our fate!'
Self-conceited idiots! thus
      Knavingly to prate!
Not for base-born, higgling Saxon trucksters
  Ring laments like these by shore and sea;
Not for churls with souls of hucksters
      Waileth our banshee!

"For the high Milesian race alone
  Ever flows the music of her woe;
For slain heir to bygone throne,
      And for chief laid low.
Hark! again, methinks, I hear her weeping
  Yonder! Is she near me now as then?
Or was but the night-wind sweeping
      Down the hollow glen?"

All Mangan's renderings are marked by distinct originality. He had such a command over rhyme and metre that he was often tempted to play pranks

with them. He is considered by many the greatest of modern Irish poets, but that proud position seems to me to rightly belong to Ferguson. Unfortunately I cannot dwell upon his writings at sufficient length to make his superiority evident. Apart from his admirable "Lays of the Western Gael," he produced in "Conary" and "Congal" two fine poems "Congal" has some magnificent passages, but "Conary" is superb, and the work of a great poet. Mere extracts from it would not convince, but it should be read by all who desire to see Ferguson at his highest point. His "Welshmen of Tyrawley," "Aideen's Grave," "The Fairy Thorn," "The Forging of the Anchor," and other poems would of themselves give him very high rank among Irish poets.

In spite of Mangan's fascination Ferguson must, I think, be acknowledged a greater poet. There is tremendous strength in some of his poems, and he rarely forgets his subject, as so many Irish poets do. A contemporary of his, Edward Walsh, is one of the most delightful of our love poets. He began to publish his truly Celtic songs in the thirties, though it was after the founding of the *Nation* that his finest work appeared. He was a poor schoolmaster, and, like many other Irish poets, was never able to collect his poems. But a couple of volumes of his translations from the Irish were issued, and it is by these he is chiefly known. He wrote national songs of love and war, and there are many vigorous ballads by him still buried in the columns of the Dublin newspapers and magazines of his day. I confess that Walsh is to me one of the best poets

Ireland has yet produced. His songs cannot but appeal most strongly to the Irish reader. He and John Keegan, his friend and contemporary, are genuine poets of the people; but Keegan, though possessing more pathos, lacked Walsh's admirable style and smoothness of versification. So long as the sentiments pleased him he did not trouble much about the form of his verses, and there is a ruggedness and unevenness in his poems which will probably prevent their ever receiving general admiration. On the other hand, there is nothing, I think, to prevent Walsh becoming known and admired wherever the English language is spoken. I give his "Brighidin Bawn Astor" as an example of his songs, and "Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh" as a specimen of his ballads.

BRIGHIDIN BAN MO STOR.[1]

"I am a wandering minstrel man,
And love my only theme;
I've strayed beside the pleasant Bann,
And eke the Shannon's stream;
I've piped and played to wife and maid
By Barrow, Suir, and Nore,
But never met a maiden yet
Like *Brighidin ban mo stor.*

"My girl hath ringlets rich and rare
By Nature's fingers wove;
Loch Carra's swan is not so fair
As is her breast of love.
And when she moves in Sunday sheen
Beyond our cottage door,
I'd scorn the high-born Saxon queen
For *Brighidin ban mo stor.*

[1] Pron. *Breedeen Bawn mo Stor.*

"It is not that thy smile is sweet,
And soft thy voice of song;
It is not that thou fleest to meet
My comings lone and long!
But that doth rest beneath thy breast
A heart of purest core,
Whose pulse is known to me alone—
My *Brighidin ban mo stor.*"

"Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh" is an address to his mistress, Margaret Kelly, by Daniel O'Keeffe, an outlaw, whom she had betrayed to the English soldiers, and is one of Walsh's best poems:

"At the dance in the village thy white foot was fleetest;
Thy voice 'mid the concert of maidens was sweetest;
The swell of thy white breast made rich lovers follow,
And thy raven hair bound them, young Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh.

"Thy neck was, lost maid, than the *ceanabhan*[1] whiter,
And the glow of thy cheek than the *monadan*[2] brighter;
But death's chain hath bound thee, thine eye's glazed and hollow,
That shone like a sunburst, young Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh.

"No more shall mine ear drink thy melody swelling,
Nor thy beamy eye brighten the outlaw's dark dwelling;
Or thy soft heaving bosom my destiny hallow
When thine arms twine around me, young Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh.

"The moss couch I brought thee to-day from the mountain
Has drunk the last drop of thy young heart's red fountain;

[1] *Canavawn*, white bog-blossom.
[2] *Monadawn*, red berry.

For this good *skian* beside me struck deep and rung hollow
In thy bosom of treason, young Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh.

"With strings of rich pearls thy white neck was laden,
And thy fingers with spoils of the Sassenach maiden.
Such rich silks enrobed not the proud dames of Mallow—
Such pure gold they wore not as Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh.

"Alas that my loved one her outlaw would injure!
Alas that he e'er proved her treason's avenger!
That this right hand should make thee a bed cold and hollow,
When in death's sleep it laid thee, young Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh!

"And while to this lone cave my deep grief I'm venting,
The Saxon's keen bandog my footsteps is scenting;
But true men await me afar in Duhallow;
Farewell, cave of slaughter, and Mairgreadh ni Chealleadh!"

I have so far only mentioned a few of the most distinctly Irish poets who appeared previous to the starting of the *Nation*, yet when I name Lady Dufferin, who has written the most pathetic of all Irish songs, Mrs. Crawford, who wrote "Kathleen Mavourneen," Samuel Lover, author of many of our best humorous lyrics, J. S. Lefanu, to whom we owe "Shamus O'Brien" and "Phadrig Crohoore," Bartholomew Simmons (praised so highly by Christopher North), Dr. Maginn, Father Prout, and Dr. Kenealy, the witty Fraserian trio, Frances Browne, the blind poetess of Donegal, and Mrs. Downing of Kenmare, most of whom also gave us their best work before 1842, you will be able to

appreciate more fairly, perhaps, the work done by the great paper founded by Davis, Dillon, and Duffy in October, 1842. It not only encouraged those already working for Irish literature, but in the space of a few years it aroused a swarm of new poets. Though the *Nation* is certainly responsible for much bad poetry, I think its services to literature are unique. I do not believe there is any other instance of a paper doing so much for a national literature in so short a space of time. Persons who were never previously suspected of poetical ability suddenly produced in their excitement really admirable poems. In many cases they were never able to get away from the commonplace a second time, but in other instances their early exaltation did not desert them. Almost from the first number Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, John O'Hagan, D. F. M'Carthy, and Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee began to write for it; and later recruits like John Frazer, R. D. Williams, Mary Kelly ("Eva"), Ellen Downing ("Mary"), Lady Wilde ("Speranza"), and a host of others were frequent contributors. We owe to it excellent and sometimes exquisite poems by writers I have not yet named. Irishmen cannot but be under an obligation to the newspaper which first printed Dr. John Kells Ingram's "Memory of the Dead," Denny Lane's "Kate of Araglen" and "Lament of the Irish Maiden," John Coen's "Awake and lie dreaming no more," Wm. Kenealy's "Moon behind the Hill" and "Exile's Last Request," Francis Davis's "Nanny," Carroll Malone's "Croppy Boy," Michael Doheny's "Acushla gal

Machree," the younger Drennan's "Battle of Beal-an-atha-buidhe," Martin McDermott's "Coulin," McCann's "O'Donnell Aboo," and Fitzjames O'Brien's "I know a lake where the cool waves break." This list includes only those pieces which are quite well known to the average student of Irish poetry, and which naturally first occur to me. Some of them are extremely pathetic, and as representative examples of a very numerous collection I will read Doheny's poem, giving at the same time another, which, however, does not come from the *Nation*,—I mean Henry Grattan Curran's "Wearing of the Green." Ingram's "Memory of the Dead" is a more finished expression of the same sentiments, but is too well known to need repetition, being in every collection, whereas I had to search nine or ten different collections of Irish poetry before I found either Doheny's or Curran's popular pieces.

THE WEARING OF THE GREEN.

"One blessing on my native isle, one curse upon her foes,
While yet her skies above me smile, her breeze around me blows;
Now never more my cheek be wet, nor sigh, nor altered mien,
Tell the dark tyrant I regret the wearing of the green.

"Sweet land! my parents loved you well; they sleep within your breast;
With theirs—for love no words can tell—my bones must never rest.
And lonely must my true love stray that was our village queen,
While I am banished far away for the wearing of the green.

"But, Mary, dry that bitter tear, 'twould break my heart to see;
And sweetly sleep, my parents dear, that cannot weep for me.
I'll think not of my distant tomb, nor seas rolled wide between,
But watch the hour that yet will come for the wearing of the green.

"Oh! I care not for the thistle, and I care not for the rose,
For when the cold winds whistle, neither down nor crimson shows;
But like hope to him that's friendless, where no gaudy flower is seen,
By our graves, with love that's endless, waves our own true-hearted green.

"Oh! sure God's world was wide enough and plentiful for all,
And ruined cabins were no stuff to build a lordly hall!
They might have let the poor man live, yet all as lordly been;
But heaven its own good time will give for the wearing of the green."

Acushla gal Machree.

"The long, long wished-for hour has come,
But come, asthore, in vain,
And left thee but the wailing hum
Of sorrow and of pain.
My light of life—my only love,
Thy portion sure must be
Man's scorn below, God's wrath above,
Acushla gal Machree!

"'Twas told of thee the world around,
'Twas hoped for thee by all,
That with one gallant sunward bound
Thou'dst burst long ages' thrall.

Thy fate was tried, alas! and those
  Who perilled all for thee
Were cursed and branded as thy foes,
  Acushla gal Machree!

* * * * *

"I've given thee my youth and prime,
  And manhood's waning years;
I've blest thee in thy sunniest time,
  And shed for thee my tears.
And, mother, though thou'dst cast away
  The child who'd die for thee,
My fondest wish is still to pray
  For cushla gal Machree.

"I've tracked for thee the mountain sides,
  And slept within the brake,
More lonely than the swan that glides
  O'er Lua's fairy lake.
The rich have spurned me from their door
  Because I'd set thee free;
Yet still I love thee more and more,
  Acushla gal Machree.

"I've run the outlaw's brief career,
  And borne his load of ill,
His troubled rest and waking fear
  With fixed, sustaining will;
And should the last dread chance befall,
  E'en that should welcome be,
In death I'd love thee most of all,
  Acushla gal Machree."

The best of the *Nation* poets were, of course, Thomas Davis, D'Arcy M'Gee, and Denis Florence McCarthy. Among others, Duffy wrote several powerful ballads; Dalton Williams is too entirely rhetorical for my taste, and I prefer his exceptionally clever humorous poems; M. J. Barry, though

an effective song-writer, has left nothing of striking excellence; while John D. Frazer and Ellen Downing ("Mary") were only satisfactory because they did not attempt too high a flight. Lady Wilde and Mary Kelly, known as "Speranza" and "Eva," both made that mistake. Neither is convincing in her more ambitious efforts. I have carefully read both their volumes, and would sooner have the simple strains of "Mary," more especially her "Conal and Eva," "My Owen," and "Talk by the Blackwater," than the whole of their poetical writings. Not that their poems are wholly without merit. They had a command of language and an occasional power entirely absent from Ellen Downing's productions; yet the latter's unostentatious muse more directly and successfully appeals to one. Lady Wilde's poems are especially marred by the intense strain she subjected herself to, which prevents her ever approaching naturalness. She will be best remembered by posterity as the mother of Oscar. Thomas Davis, one of the most popular of our poets, is also one of our best. Several of his historical ballads, notably "Fontenoy" and "The Sack of Baltimore," can only be described by the words "grand" and "vivid," and his lyrics are often peculiarly beautiful. He is the most conspicuous instance in Irish literature of the poet equally good in descriptions of love and war. His historical ballads require to be read by some one with good declamatory power. I will confine myself, therefore, to two of his songs instead;

The Battle Eve of the Brigade.

"The mess tent is full and the glasses are set,
And the gallant Count Thomond is president yet.
The vet'ran arose like an uplifted lance,
Crying, 'Comrades! a health to the monarch of France!'
With bumpers and cheers they have done as he bade,
For King Louis is loved by the Irish Brigade.

"'A health to King James,' and they bent as they quaffed;
'Here's to George the Elector,' and fiercely they laughed;
'Good luck to the girls we wooed long ago
Where Shannon and Barrow and Blackwater flow.'
'God prosper old Ireland'—you'd think them afraid,
So pale grew the chiefs of the Irish Brigade.

"But surely that light cannot come from our lamp;
And that noise—are they all getting 'drunk in the camp'?
'Hurrah, boys! the morning of battle has come,
And the *generale's* beating on many a drum;'
So they rush from the revel to join the parade,
For the van is the right of the Irish Brigade.

"They fought as they revelled, fast, fiery, and true;
And, though victors, they left on the field not a few.
And they who survived fought and drank as of yore,
But the land of their heart's hope they never saw more;
For on far foreign fields, from Dunkirk to Belgrade,
Lie the soldiers and chiefs of the Irish Brigade."

Oh the Marriage!

"Oh the marriage, the marriage,
With love and my bouchal for me!
The ladies that ride in a carriage
Might envy my marriage to me;

For Owen is straight as a tower,
And tender and loving and true;
He told me more love in an hour
Than the squires of the county could do.
Oh the marriage, the marriage!
(*First four lines again.*)

"His hair is a shower of soft gold,
His eye is as clear as the day,
His conscience and vote were unsold
When others were carried away.
His word is as good as an oath,
And freely 'twas given to me;
Oh! sure 'twill be happy for both
The day of our marriage to see.
Oh the marriage! &c.

"His kinsmen are honest and kind,
The neighbours think much of his skill;
And Owen's the lad to my mind,
Though he owns neither cattle nor mill;
But he has a tilloch of land,
A horse, and a stocking of coin,
A foot for a dance, and a hand
In the cause of his country to join.
Then oh the marriage! &c.

"We meet in the market and fair,
We meet in the morning and night;
He sits on the half of my chair,
And my people are wild with delight.
Yet I long through the winter to skim,
Though Owen longs more, I can see,
When I will be married to him
And he will be married to me."
Then oh the marriage! &c.

I think I am correct in saying that Davis's songs are now as often sung by Irishmen as Moore's.

John O'Hagan's are good party songs, but they have nothing permanent about them. His "Ourselves alone," "Dear Land," and so on, however national and excellent their sentiment, can hardly be called true poetry. In the love ballad he was far more at home, and his "Old Story" will outlive all his other lyrics. His remarkable translation of "The Song of Roland" hardly comes into my subject, but it reminds me that Irishmen have been amongst the most successful translators of the century. His friend Denis Florence McCarthy is better known out of Ireland by his versions from Calderon than by his Irish poems. Time will not admit of my quoting any of his mellifluous lyrics, but it must be said of his longer poems generally that they are somewhat too syrupy,—mere confectionery, in fact,—and that a little of his verse goes a long way. He had, like a later poet, T. C. Irwin, very little force, but an astonishing fancy, and such thoughts as he has are most carefully decorated. He was the most melodious of the *Nation* poets, as D'Arcy McGee was the most rugged. McGee stands high in our literature by virtue of his many fine ballads and lyrics. I can only name "The Celts," "Cathal's Farewell to the Rye," and "The Irish Wife."

There are two other poets of much merit, not included in the list I have given, as they were not legitimately *Nation* poets. They both went to America after the '48 failure; their names are Joseph Brenan and John Savage. Brenan addressed a love song to his wife, "Come to me, dearest," which is rightly considered one of

the very best we have; and Savage is chiefly known by his magnificent ballad of "Shaun's Head."

Since 1848 Irish poets have mostly improved in *technique*, but it has frequently been at the expense of other merits. A writer who really appeared long before 1848 was Arthur Gerald Geoghegan, author of "The Monks of Kilcrea," a poem which aroused great interest at the time it was published. It was anonymous, and many inquiries were made as to its author. It is a ballad-poem in the manner of Scott, and is the only tolerably successful imitation of him yet published by an Irish poet. It is really excellent in parts, but Geoghegan is much better in his shorter poems. "The Mountain Fern" is, perhaps, his best lyric, and "The Battle of Lough Swilly" his best ballad. Only a little of his verse appeared in the *Nation*. In the fifties his "Monks of Kilcrea" was brought out in book form, and ran through two or three editions—an astounding event for an Irish poem,—and was translated into French. Geoghegan, who was a collector of Inland Revenue at Somerset House, died only three or four years ago. William Allingham, who is already accepted as one of the greatest of our poets, published his first volume in 1850. Before his death, which occurred a short time back, he had brought out more than a dozen volumes of verse, and among them a remarkable work called "Laurence Bloomfield in Ireland," which is not half as widely read in Ireland as it should be. It is written after the manner of Crabbe, and gives such strikingly good descriptions of Irish life that it alone would ensure its author a prominent position in Irish literary

history. But it is of his lyrics I wish to speak. I need only refer to one of them, his nearly perfect love song entitled "Lovely Mary Donnelly," but I wish to strongly emphasise the importance to Irish literature of the collected edition of his "Irish Songs and Poems." He had a mania for changing his phrases, and was always meddling with them and altering them for the worse, evidently under the impression that a poet can do what he likes with his own writings. Thomas Caulfield Irwin wrote some very graceful effusions, but there is surprisingly little good poetry in his five volumes, though he was once called in an English magazine "the Irish Keats." John Francis O'Donnell, another poet of the period, was rather Tennysonian in his descriptive passages, but he did write some true poetry. Of the other lesser poets who flourished in the fifties I ought to mention the names of witty Charles Graham Halpine, Michael Hogan, a fierce satirist, and John Walsh, a schoolmaster like his earlier namesake, and a poet who is strangely neglected. Aubrey de Vere's first Irish volume was "Innisfail, a lyrical chronicle," but he had been writing and publishing some years before that appeared. On the whole, though he has written many exquisite non-Irish lyrics and sonnets, I look upon this as almost the best thing he has done. One would never suspect its author was anything but an intense Nationalist, though he is far from that. He has risen high above the ordinary level, and in dignity and beauty is superior to most Irish poets. I can only read you a couple of his smaller poems ("The Old Land" and "Dirge for Rory O'More").

"Ah! kindly and sweet, we must love thee perforce;
The disloyal, the coward alone would not love thee;
Ah! mother of heroes! strong mother! soft nurse!
We are thine while the large cloud swims onward above thee!
By thy hills ever blue that draw heaven so near,
By thy cliffs, by thy lakes, by thine ocean-lulled highlands;
And more—by thy records disastrous and dear,
The shrines on thy headlands, the cells in thine islands.

"Ah, well sings the thrush by Lixnaw and Traighli!
Ah, well breaks the wave upon Umbhall and Brandon!
Thy breeze o'er the highland blows clement and free,
And o'er fields, once his own, that the hind must abandon.
A caitiff the noble who draws from thy plains
His all, yet reveres not the cause of his greatness;
A clown and a serf, 'mid his boundless domains
His spirit consumes in the prison of his straightness!

"Through the cloud of thy pathos thy face is more fair;
In old time thou wert sun-clad; the gold robe thou worest:
To thee the heart turns, as the deer to her lair,
Ere she dies, her first bed in the gloom of the forest.
Our glory, our sorrow, our mother! Thy God
In thy worst dereliction forsook but to prove thee;
Blind, blind as the blindworm—cold, cold as the clod,
Who, seeing thee, see not; possess, but not love thee!"

Dirge of Rory O'More.

(O'More was one of the Irish chieftains of the seventeenth century—"the silk of the kine" is one of the mystical names of Ireland.)

"Up the sea-saddened valley at evening's decline
A heifer walks lowing—"the silk of the kine;"

From the deep to the mountains she roams, and again
From the mountains' green urn to the purple-rimmed main.

"What seek'st thou, sad mother? Thine own is not thine!
He dropped from the headland—he sank in the brine!
'Twas a dream! but in dreams at thy foot did he follow
Through the meadow-sweet on by the marish and mallow.

"Was he thine? Have they slain him? Thou seek'st him not knowing
Thyself, too, art theirs—thy sweet breath and sad lowing;
Thy gold horn is theirs, thy dark eye and thy silk,
And that which torments thee, thy milk is their milk.

"'Twas no dream, motherland! 'Twas no dream, Innisfail!
Hope dreams, but grief dreams not—the grief of the Gael!
From Leix and Ikerrin to Donegal's shore
Rolls the dirge of thy last and thy bravest O'More!"

John Francis Waller also belongs to the fifties, when most of his admirable lyrics, notably "The Spinning-wheel Song" and "Kitty Neil," which are deservedly popular, appeared. It is worth noting that he has died within the last week. He had something of the melody of Moore, with perhaps more genial humour.

Dr. Robert Dwyer Joyce, a Limerick man like Waller and De Vere, was quite as intensely Irish as any of our writers, and some of his ballads are very stirring. They are almost the last of their school, and I would certainly say that he is the last of the

historical poets. There is much monotony in his volume of ballads from their being all more or less on the same theme. Several of them are of the highest excellence, and though very headlong in manner, he is not the less correct in rhyme and metre. He published two epic poems, one of which, "Deirdre," had an extraordinary success in America, and was warmly praised by the late James Russell Lowell. I will read you one of the best known of his shorter ballads ("Fineen the Rover"):

Fineen the Rover.

"An old castle towers o'er the billows
That thunder by Cleena's green land,
And there dwells as gallant a rover
As ever grasped hilt in the hand.
Eight stately towers of the waters
Lie anchored in Baltimore Bay,
And over their twenty score sailors
O! who but that Rover holds sway?
Then ho for Fineen the Rover!
Fineen O'Driscoll the free;
Straight as the mast of his galley,
And wild as a wave of the sea!

"The Saxons of Cork and Moyallo,
They harried his lands with their powers;
He gave them a taste of his cannon,
And drove them like wolves from his towers.
The men of Clan London brought over
Their strong fleet to make him a slave;
He met them near Mizen's wild headland,
And the sharks gnawed their bones 'neath the wave.
Then ho for Fineen the Rover!
Fineen O'Driscoll the free;
With step like the red stag of Beara,
And voice like the bold-sounding sea!

"Long time in that battered old castle,
Or out on the waves with his clan,
He feasted, and ventured, and conquered,
But ne'er struck his colours to man.
In a fight 'gainst the foes of his country
He died as a brave man should die;
And he sleeps 'neath the waters of Cleena,
Where the waves sing his *caoine* to the sky!
Then ho for Fineen the Rover!
Fineen O'Driscoll the free;
With eye like the osprey's at morning,
And smile like the sun on the sea!"

Charles Kickham is the author of two or three admirable peasant ballads, and has also written some sketches of Irish life as good as anything we possess. In John Locke's graphic "Morning on the Irish Coast," Mrs. Forrester's touching "Widow's Message to her Son," and William Collins's "Sigh for Old Times" you have three of the most characteristic of modern Irish poems, yet only one of them has found a place in the usual collections. I am afraid I must not stop to discuss the admirable poems of Dr. Sigerson, and can only barely indicate the existence of that group of Irish-American writers who have been for many years enriching our literature. Absence from Ireland has not had any appreciable effect on the Irish poems of John Boyle O'Reilly, Rev. A. J. Ryan, James McCarroll, Mrs. Mary Blake, and Michael Scanlan. They are well worth studying, and must be taken into account by anyone desiring adequate knowledge of modern Irish poetry. Before coming to the living writers I wish to dwell for a moment on a poet and poetess who were inspired by,

and flourished in the Fenian period, and who have each written poems which will probably outlive all the rest produced in consequence of and during that struggle. I consider John Keegan Casey one of the finest of our later lyrists; not because of his "Rising of the Moon," but by reason of his beautiful love-songs. He died at the early age of twenty-one in 1870. The poetess I have alluded to is Miss Fanny Parnell, who, in her "After Death," it seems to me, has given us a most touching poem, written with the full knowledge of her early death, which occurred shortly after.

After Death.

"Shall mine eyes behold thy glory, O my country? shall mine eyes behold thy glory?
Or shall the darkness close around them ere the sun-blaze break at last upon thy story?

"When the nations ope for thee their queenly circle, as a sweet new sister hail thee,
Shall these lips be sealed in callous death and silence, that have known but to bewail thee?

"Shall the ear be deaf that only loved thy praises, when all men their tribute bring thee?
Shall the mouth be clay that sang thee in thy squalor, when all poets' mouths shall sing thee?

"Ah! the harpings and the salvoes and the shoutings of thy exiled sons returning
I should hear though dead and mouldered, and the grave-damps should not chill my bosom's burning.

"Ah! the tramp of feet victorious! I should hear them 'mid the shamrocks and the mosses,
And my heart should toss within the shroud and quiver as a captive dreamer tosses.

"I should turn and rend the cere-clothes round me, giant sinews I should borrow,
Crying, 'O my brothers, I have also loved her in her loneliness and sorrow.

"'Let me join with you the jubilant procession, let me chant with you her story;
Then contented I will go back to the shamrocks now mine eyes have seen her glory!'"

I may remark, *apropos* of the early death of Miss Parnell, that we have quite lately lost two other young poetesses from whom much might have been expected, namely, Miss Rose Kavanagh and Mrs. Frances Wynne.

I have now arrived at the last portion of my paper. It would be quite impossible for me to attempt to give you more than a vague idea of contemporary Irish poetry. We have, first, the non-Irish school, which is represented most admirably by Mr. Stopford Brooke, Edw. Dowden, Miss Emily Hickey, George Savage-Armstrong, Edmund Holmes, and others; and we have the purely Irish writers like Mr. Yeats, Mr. Graves, Dr. Douglas Hyde, Dr. Todhunter, Francis Fahy, T. D. Sullivan, Miss Katharine Tynan, Miss Dora Sigerson, and Miss Jane Barlow. Of the former school I can say nothing here, as they do not come within the lines I have proceeded on, but naturally the others claim a word or two. T. D. Sullivan's historical or legendary ballads are his best, and he has also written very popular lyrics, but the most successful of our living song writers is, beyond doubt, Mr. Alfred Percival Graves, whose words to Irish airs are among the most felicitous ever written. I know no Irish writer who more exactly suits an air with words.

Some of his songs, as we all know, are exceptionally popular. He is essentially best as a pastoral poet. His songs nearly always have to do with open-air occupations and pastimes, and the courting he describes almost invariably goes on in the fields. In this he differs largely from another true Irish poet, Francis A. Fahy, whose songs and poems are more often than not descriptive of home life. Mr. Graves has a very delicate wit, much grace and ease, and is what Moore was described as being, a musician in words. The humour of Mr. Fahy is more pronounced, but Mr. Graves is the better artist, and has written some beautiful lullabies and other poems of tenderness. I would like to read several of Mr. Graves' most musical songs, but will have to content myself with one, "Nancy, the Pride of the West:"

"We have dark lovely looks on the shores where the Spanish
From their gay ships came gallantly forth,
And the sweet shrinking violets sooner will vanish
Than modest blue eyes from our north.
But oh! if the fairest of fair-daughtered Erin
Gathered round at her golden request,
There's not one of them all that she'd think worth comparing
With Nancy, the pride of the west.
You'd suspect her the statue the Greek fell in love with,
If you chanced on her musing alone;
Or some goddess great Jove was offended above with,
And chilled to a sculpture of stone;
But you'd think her no colourless, classical statue
When she turned from her pensive repose,
With her glowing grey eyes glancing timidly at you,
And the blush of a beautiful rose.

"Have you heard Nancy sigh? Then you've caught the sad echo
From the wind-harp enchantingly borne.
Have you heard the girl laugh? Then you've heard the first cuckoo—
Carol summer's delightful return.
And the songs that poor ignorant country folk fancy
The lark's liquid raptures on high,
Are just old Irish airs from the sweet lips of Nancy,
Flowing up and refreshing the sky.
Yet for all that the bee flies for honey-dew fragrant
To the half-opened flower of her lips,
And the butterfly pauses, the purple-eyed vagrant,
To play with her pink finger-tips,
From all human lovers she locks up the treasure
A thousand are starving to taste;
And the fairies alone know the magical measure
Of the ravishing round of her waist."

From Mr. W. B. Yeats more is expected than from any other of the younger Irish poets of the time. His first volume was a revelation, and gave him more than a merely Irish reputation. I consider him the most original and truly poetical of all recent poets, whether Irish or English. Dr. Todhunter had written several admirable volumes of verse before he turned his attention to Irish subjects. Beyond the bare mention of his name and that of Dr. Hyde, who has shown in his recently published "Love Songs of Connaught" what poetic skill he possesses, I cannot venture at this hour. Miss Tynan has long since proved herself one of the truest of our poetesses; while the latest, Miss Dora Sigerson, has just issued a volume of dainty verse which has been very well received. In conclusion I ought to say that it will be very

difficult for those who desire to study our modern poetry to do it without great trouble. We have no thoroughly good collection of Irish verse; some are good as far as they go, but they are either quite out of date or otherwise most inadequate. It will be found that a very considerable quantity of first-rate Irish poetry is still buried in the newspapers and magazines of the last half-century. And of all the poets I have mentioned, probably not more than half have ever had their poems collected. The usual plan seems to be to leave writings of Irish poets entirely derelict; but sometimes the other extreme is adopted, and every line they ever penned is shovelled into some huge volume, which is then quickly forgotten. The comparative inaccessibility of much of our poetical literature will account for the very unsatisfactory nature of our anthologies. I can hardly have hoped to convince you of its many beauties, and in the absence of any thoroughly good collection cannot strongly recommend any book on the subject. But in Alfred M. Williams' compilation, published in Boston a few years ago, incomplete as it is, you will find much that is admirable, and it will probably induce you to seek further acquaintance with an unjustly neglected literature—distinguished above that of most nations for purity, humanity, and gracefulness.

"THE PARADISE OF DAINTY DEVICES." (1576.)

BY R. A. DOUGLAS LITHGOW, M.D., LL.D., F.S.A., ETC.
Vice-President, R.S.L.

[Read February 8th, 1894.]

THE ever-widening stream of English poetry had, in the time of Elizabeth, become a majestic flood, flowing deeply and tunefully amid the flowery meads of song.

By the banks of this stately river there then existed, and still exist, unfrequented paths leading to secluded retreats, hidden by the shade of verdant foliage, sweet with the breath of wild-flowers, and where wimpling streamlets, fed from the parent source, made their own low, sweet music amid scenes of ever-varying beauty, sacred to Nature and her perennial charms.

Here the crooning brooklets sang amid the amorous sunshine, making the verdure gay and the flowers rejoice; and here the devastating hand of Time has still spared the sequestered dells of delight, in which is still preserved much of that English song-bloom, whose fragrance still is wafted into the hearts of those who dwell within our island home.

To one of those little-known but beautiful song-haunts I wish to conduct you this afternoon; it is

called *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, and, surely, its very name is sufficiently characteristic and appropriate to assure us of pleasure in its contemplation.

Before actually entering into this *Paradise*, I would ask you to accompany me a little further up the banks of the river, so that we may together observe for a moment a few of the places where the stream began to widen out from its far-off source, and note such objects and appearances as may throw some light upon the formation and locality of the bower which we desire especially to examine.

For over 150 years after the death of Chaucer—from the time of Henry IV to that of Elizabeth—the English muse was dormant and silent, although we find the names of Occleve and Lydgate, both weak imitators of their master, Chaucer; also those of Hawes and Skelton, the former the last representative of the Chaucerian school, which had become weaker and weaker as Time went on, and the latter, although stronger and more vigorous, yet manifesting a characteristic English predisposition to "prosaic doggerel."[1] In Scotland, however, during the same period, the muse was active enough, as James I, William Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lyndsay have left an imperishable record in the literature of the sister country.

The publication of *Songs and Sonnets, written by the Right Honble. Lord Henry Howard, late Earl of Surrey, and others*, or, to give the volume its more familiar name, *Tottel's Miscellany*, marked the dawn of a renewed period of poetical culture and activity.

[1] Saintsbury.

This did not, however, appear until the authors, for at least the most part, had been dead some time, or had written years previously. At the period of its publication (1557) the poets had a great disinclination to have any of their works printed or published, much preferring them to serve for the amusement or entertainment of their friends.

Nicholas Grimald, or Grimoald, chaplain to the then Bishop of Ely, is supposed to have edited the *Miscellany*, of which two editions appeared during the year of publication. In the first edition forty poems are signed by his name in full, whereas, in the second edition, the initials "N. G." are substituted for the full name, and many of his poems have been omitted to make room for those of others. Lord Surrey has forty contributions, and Sir Thomas Wyatt ninety-six; those unsigned are, for the most part, the works of unknown authors, numbering in the second edition 134. Of these, four are supposed to be, respectively, the work of Lord Vaux (2), John Heywood (1), and Edward Somerset (1). Nothing definite is known as to the authorship of the others beyond the fact that Churchyard and Sir Francis Bryan also contributed. Shakespeare[1] quotes three or four verses in the grave-digger's scene, from one of Lord Vaux's poems, entitled *The aged lover renouncith love*, and in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*[2] directly alludes to the *Miscellany* by making Slender say—

"I had rather than forty shillings I had my book of Songs and Sonnets here."

[1] *Hamlet*, act v, sc. 1.
[2] Act i, sc. 1

The latter title is the one by which the *Miscellany* is alluded to by Churchyard, and still later by Drayton. That Shakespeare referred to this collection is further proved by the fact that English sonnets were quite unknown until after its publication.

Unfortunately I cannot now stay to criticise the poetry contained in this very interesting volume, but amongst the many contributors the work of none excelled that of Wyatt and Surrey, who breathed new life and vigour into English poetry, attributable doubtless to their both having drunk from the immortal fountains of Petrarch, Dante, and Ariosto. Moreover, Surrey has the honour of introducing the sonnet into English versification, and (if we accept two previous attempts by N. Grimald, entitled *The Death of Zoroas* and *The Death of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, published in the *Miscellany*) to have written the first blank verse in English in his translations from the *Æneid*, published separately by Tottel in June, 1557. *Tottel's Miscellany* went through nine editions during the thirty years from 1557 to 1587.

The publication of *Tottel's Miscellany* brings us within a year of the accession of Elizabeth.

For about a quarter of a century afterwards we find neither poet nor poetry of the highest class, until the light of Spenser's genius gleamed over the literary firmament, with the exception of Thomas Sackville's contribution to the *Mirror for Magistrates*, the poetical miscellany which succeeded that of Tottel.

This Miscellany was edited by William Baldwin,

and, like its predecessor, went through nine editions from 1559 to 1621. To the second edition—that of 1563—Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, contributed two poems—*The Induction*, and *The Complaint of Buckingham*, which constitute any literary merit that the collection contains. These two poems are authoritatively estimated as the greatest efforts in English poetry between Chaucer and Spenser, and there is reasonable proof that some of Spenser's best work was modelled upon them. They alone indicate, by the charm of their melody, their spontaneity and freshness, and their truth to nature the further poetic development which was to be realised later.

This, again, was succeeded by *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, as the latter was succeeded by *A Gorgeous Gallery of Gallant Inventions*, *A Handful of Pleasant Delites*, *The Phœnix Nest*, *England's Helicon*, *A Poetical Rhapsody*, *England's Parnassus*, and others of a similar class, published between 1576 and 1600.

During the period we have now traversed, we find, in addition to these miscellanies, the works of Googe, Turberville, Gascoigne, Churchyard, Whetstone, Bretton, Lodge, and a host of minor lights, any detailed account of whom would be foreign to the object of this paper. Many of these volumes are exceedingly rare, but I can only express a fervent hope that, in course of time, we may have the entire series reprinted, and that each of them may appear as complete and satisfactory as Mr. Arber's indefatigable labour has made *Tottel's Miscellany*, and many another rare volume from the

almost inexhaustible supply afforded by the Elizabethan era of our poetical history.

This very rapid and imperfect sketch of the poetical literature written between the time of Chaucer and Spenser will at least serve to sustain the already-stated fact, viz. that from 1400, the year of Chaucer's death, until 1557, a year before Elizabeth began to reign, the poetical historian has very little to chronicle of more than ordinary importance in the evolution of English poetry. Nay, more, for about a quarter of a century after Elizabeth's accession, comparatively little progress had been made in the development of poetic genius.

The dawn of English poetry emerged from the twilight in the time of Chaucer, and although it did not reach its noontide splendour until the genius of Spenser illumined the gloomy sky, yet, during the 170 or 180 years which separated the two periods, the light still burned and glowed, however fitfully, and became purified and intensified as time went on. In *Tottel's Miscellany* we find the first promise of the golden era to which poetry was hastening, for Surrey and Wyatt had introduced and set up new forms and models, and to a certain extent revolutionised English versification; and although the results of their work were not seen at once, the spirit of true inspiration was abroad, and men looked forward hopefully to a still higher development in the near future.

To this succeeded the *Mirror for Magistrates*, containing Sackville's most admirable contributions, in which even a higher key-note was struck, for although modelled for the most part on the favourite

rhymed stanza of Chaucer, their whole conception is Dantesque in their originality, and they literally teem with allegorical personages framed in the most glowing and delicate imagery. Whether in conception or expression they are full of power and majesty, and their striking originality is only equalled by the vividity and beauty of their colouring.

By a rather devious path we now approach *The Paradise of Dainty Devices;* let us enter into it for a short time, and examine its many and varied attractions.

The Paradise of Dainty Devices is the title of a poetical miscellany, the first edition of which was published in 1576, being the eighteenth year of Elizabeth's reign. The full title-page of the first edition is as follows:—

THE PARADYSE

of daynty deuises

Aptly furnished, with sundry pithie and learned inuentions:

deuised and written for the most part by M. Edwards, sometimes of her Maiestie's Chappel: the rest by sundry learned Gentlemen, both of honor and woorshippe

viz.

S. Barnarde	Iasper Heywood.
E. O.	F. K.
L. Vaux	M. Bevve.
D. S.	R. Hill.

M. Yloop, with others.

[Device in an oval: an Angel crowned, holding in the right hand a flaming heart of Charity; in the left a cross; standing on a figure described by the word "Diabolus;" with various inscriptions and emblematical allusions, supposed to represent the victory of Virtue and Eternal light. The Printer's monogram in one corner. Motto in the oval: *Ego sum Via et Veritas.*]

IMPRINTED AT LON-
-don, by Henry Disle, dwellyng in
Paule's Churchyard, at the South-west Doore
of Saint Paule's Church, and are there to be solde.
1576.

On the other side of title-page are the arms of Sir Henry Compton; and then follows the following dedication:

TO THE RIGHT HONO-
-rable Syr Henry Compton, Knight,
Lord Compton, of Compton.

RIGHT HONORABLE, and my very good Lord, presuming vppon your curtesy, I am bolde to pressent vnto your honor, this small volume: Entituled, The Paradise of deynty deuises, being penned by diuers learned Gentlemen, and collected togeather, through the trauell of one, both of woorship and credite, for his priuate use: who not long since departed this lyfe, which when I had perused ouer, not

without the aduise of sundry my freendes, I determined by theyr good motion, to set them in print, who thervnto greatly perswaded me with these and like woordes: The wryters of them, were both of honor and worship: besides that, our owne countrey men, and such as for theyr learnyng and grauitie, might be accounted of among the wisest. Furthermore, the ditties pithy and pleasant, aswell for the inuention as meter, and wyll yeelde a farre greater delight, being as they are so aptly made to be set to any song in 5 partes, or song to instrument. Which wel consydering, I purposed not to forsake so good an occasion, beseeching your honor to accept it in good part, chiefely for the aucthours sake; who though some of them are departed this lyfe, yet theyr woorthy doings shall continue for euer: for like as the shadow foloweth the body, so praise foloweth vertue: and as the shadow goeth sometimes before, and sometimes behind, so doth praise also to vertue; but the later it commeth, the greater it is, and to be the better esteemed. Thus fearing to offende your honour with these my rude speaches, I end, wishing your L. many yeres of ioy.

Your good Lordship's wholy to commaund,

H. D.

The initials "H. D.," by which the dedication is signed, are those of Henry Disle, who published the work in 1576.

Although the volume was not published until 1576, it appears that the collection of poems of which it consists was made by Richard Edwards, who had died ten years previously to the publication. His name appears on the title-page as that of

the principal deviser and writer, and it is to him that Disle refers in the dedication where he says that the poems contained in this volume "had been collected together through the travail of one both of worship and credit, for his own private use, who not long since departed this life." As a matter of fact Edwards died in 1566, aged 43.

On analysing this interesting little volume we find it to consist of about 100 minor poems, of which, in the first edition, nine are anonymous. Taking the first and second editions together there are 124 poems and eleven anonymous; the remaining 113 are, with the exception of seven, signed either with the full names or the initials of their writers, amounting to twenty-six. The exceptional seven are signed *My lucke is losse*, but I shall refer to this signature later on.

Before referring particularly to the literary character of the little volume now under consideration, it seems best that I should give a few biographical details of the authors, so far as they are known, and to make such quotations from their poems as may give some general idea of the contents, such as may enable us to form an estimate of its interest and worth.

As the principal place has been assigned to Richard Edwards in the production of the volume, and is due to him, not only from the quality, but the quantity of his contributions, I make no apology for introducing him first. Edwards was born in Somersetshire about the year 1523; he was a scholar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he was educated, and in 1547 was nominated a senior student

of Christ Church. In 1561, he was appointed Master of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel Royal, and of the Singing Boys, in which capacity he trained the children of the chapel to act, for her Majesty's pleasure, interludes and plays of his own writing. In 1566, the year in which he died, he was employed to compose a play, entitled *Palámon and Arcite*, and accompanied the Queen to Oxford, where it was acted before her Majesty in Christ Church Hall.[1]

Edwards' contributions to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* are fourteen in number, from which I have selected the following:—

MAY.

"When May is in his prime, then may each heart rejoice;
When May bedecks each branch with green, each bird strains forth his voice,
The lively sap creeps up into the blooming thorn,
The flowers, which cold in prison kept, now laughs[2] the frost to scorn.
All Nature's imps triumphs[2] while joyful May doth last:
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant time is past.

"May makes the cheerful hue, May brings and breeds new blood;
May marcheth throughout every limb, May makes the merry mood;

[1] For these and the following biographical details, I must express my indebtedness to Sir Egerton Brydges' Preface to *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, as contained in the *British Bibliographer*, vol. iii.

[2] "Not a false concord, but use of the Northern plural in *s*."—HENRY MORLEY.

May pricketh tender hearts, their warbling notes to tune;
Full strange it is, yet some, we see, do make their May in June.
Thus things are strangely wrought while joyful May doth last;
Take May in time: when May is gone the pleasant time is past.

"All ye that live on earth, and have your May at will,
Rejoice in May, as I do now, and use your May with skill;
Use May while that you may, for May hath but his time:
When all the fruit is gone it is too late the tree to climb.
Your liking and your lust, is fresh whiles May doth last—
When May is gone, of all the year the pleasant time is past."

Warton says that the poem I have just read is the most poetical of Edwards' productions in the present collection, but I quite agree with Sir Egerton Brydges in thinking that the author has struck a far higher note in the celebrated song on Terence's apothegm of *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio est*, which I consider as one of the sweetest lyrics in our literature. I here reproduce it:

"In goyng to my naked bedde, as one that would have slept,
I heard a wife syng to her child, that long before had wept:
She sighéd sore and sang full sore to brynge the babe to rest,
That would not rest, but criéd still in suckyng at her brest.

She was full wearie of her watche, and grevéd with her child—
She rockéd it, and rated it, vntill on her it smilde;
Then did she saie nowe have I founde the prouerbe true to prove:
'The fallyng out of faithfull frends is the renúyng of love.'

"Then tooke I paper, penne, and ynke, this prouerbe for to write,
In regester for to remaine of suche a worthi wight.
As she proceeded thus in song vnto her little bratte,
Much matter uttered she of waight in place whereas she satte;
And prouéd plaine there was no beast nor creature bearyng life
Could well be known to live in loue without discorde and strife.
Then kisséd she her little babe, and sware by God aboue,
'The fallyng out of faithfull frends is the renúyng of love.'

"She said that neither king ne prince ne lord could liue aright
Untill their puissance thei did proue, their manhode and their might.
When manhode shalbe matchéd so, that feare can take no place,
Then wearie works makes warriours eche other to embrace;
And leaue their forse that failéd thẽ, whiche did consume the rout,
That might before have liuéd their tyme and nature out.
Then did she syng as one that thought no man could her reproue:
'The fallyng out of faithfull frends is the renúyng of love.'

"She said she sawe no fish ne foule, nor beast within her haunt,
That mett a straunger in their kinde, but could geue it a taunt;
Since fleshe might not indure, but reste must wrath succede,
And forse the fight to fall to plaie, in pasture where thei feede;
So noble nature can well ende the works she hath begone,
And bridle well that will not cease her tragedy in some.
Thus in her songe she oft reherst, as did her well behoue,
'The fallyng out of faithfull frends is the renúyng of love.'

"I mervaile much, pardy, quoth she, for to beholde the route,
To see man, woman, boy, and beast to tosse the worlde about:
Some knele, some crouch, some beck, some check, and some cã smothly smile,
And some embrace othérs in armes, and there think many a wile;
Some stand aloufe at cap and knee, some humble and some stout,
Yet are thei neuer frends indeede until thei once fall out.
Thus ended she her song, and saied before she did remoue,
'The fallyng out of faithfull frends is the renúyng of love.'"

There is a dainty elegance of expression, a tenderness of sentiment, and a facile gracefulness in the poem just read, which are only equalled by its exquisite rhythm and the happiness of its illustrations; and altogether it is an evidence of literary

culture and refinement which is simply admirable when we consider the period at which it was written. "Yet," as Sir Egerton Brydges says, "has the treasure which this gem adorned lain buried and inaccessible, except to a few curious collectors, for at least a century and a half." After his death Edwards received eulogistic notices from Turberville, Twyne, Meres, and Puttenham, and was so far honoured by Shakespeare as to have one of his lyrics, *In Commendation of Music*, quoted in *Romeo and Juliet*.[1]

To Lord Vaux must be assigned the next place to Edwards, by reason of merit as well as from the number of his contributions. He was Thomas, the second peer, and was born in 1510, and died in or about 1557. He was Captain of the *Isle of Jersey* and was besides a *persona grata* to King Henry VIII. He received the Order of the Bath at the coronation of Queen Anne Boleyn. As a poet he was commended by George Gascoigne, who compared him with Lord Surrey; also by Puttenham in his *Arte of English Poesie*, who praises him for the facility of his metre and the aptness of his descriptions.

Perhaps his two most pleasing poems are those contributed by him to *Tottel's Miscellany*, respectively entitled "A Ditty or Sonnet made in the time of the noble Q. Mary, representing the Image of Death," and the "Assault of Cupid upon the Fort in which the lover's heart lay wounded." I regret that time will not allow me to quote them here, but as they were not contributed to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, I prefer quoting only those poems

[1] Act iv, sc. 3: "Where gryping grief the heart would wound," &c.

which have appeared in this collection. Lord Vaux's contributions to the first edition number thirteen, and one in that of 1580.

He was, however, almost morbid in his pessimism, and although surrounded by every luxury and occupying such an exalted position, life afforded him no joy. To him the world seemed a rank wilderness, in which every growth of worth or virtue was choked by low intrigue and corruption, by ingratitude and perfidy, and so hopeless in its depravity that every moral struggle was unavailing. Thinking thus, it is little to be wondered at that he found life almost unbearable, and sought for peace beyond the grave. His poems are not without pathos, and are by no means deficient in sentiment, but while replete with religious fervour, they mostly all rail at life, and express longings for a future and happier condition of being.

I quote the following as an example of his poetry:—

"No Pleasure without some Pain."

"How can the tree but waste and wither away
That hath not sometime comfort of the sun?
How can that flower but fade and soon decay
That always is with dark clouds overrun?
Is this a life? Nay, death you may it call,
That feels each pain and knows no joy at all.

"What foodless beasts can live long in good plight—
Or is it life when senses there be none?
Or what availeth eyes without their light,
Or else a tongue to him that is alone?
Is this a life? Nay, death you may it call,
That feels each pain and knows no joy at all.

"Whereto serve ears, if that there be no sound,
Or such a head where no device doth grow?
But all of plaints, since sorrow is the ground
Whereby the heart doth pine in deadly woe.
Is this a life? Nay, death you may it call,
That feels each pain and knows no joy at all."

From the foregoing it will be seen that while the metre, rhythm, and sentiment are commendable, yet that the author's poetical range is neither high nor extensive, nor are his doleful ditties such as to justify me in afflicting you with any more of them.

Our next contributor is Edward Vere, seventeenth Earl of Oxford, who was born about 1541, and died in 1604. Lord Oxford was a courtier, who travelled in Italy during his adolescence, and upon whom Queen Elizabeth conferred the prize, for his doughty deeds in a tournament, in 1580. In 1586 he sat as Lord Great Chamberlain of England on the trial of Mary, Queen of Scots, and subsequently on the trials of several of his peers. His private character was, however, inconsistent with the position he held at court, and he is said to have been vain, haughty, and affected. Notwithstanding his character as a man, his contemporaries speak highly of his merits as a poet, amongst whom I may mention Munday, Greene, Lock, Spenser, Lily, Golding and others. He contributed to many of the miscellanies of his time, and perhaps his most meritorious work is a poem entitled *Fancy and Desire*, which he contributed to *Breton's Bower of Delights*, although Mr. Henry Morley, in his *Shorter English Poems*, inaccurately refers to its appearance in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*. Lord Oxford, however, contri-

buted in all seven poems to this latter collection, and I quote the following as a fair example of his poetical work, entitled "His mind not quietly settled, he writeth thus":

"Even as the wax doth melt, or dew consume away
Before the sun, so I, behold, through careful thoughts decay:
For my best luck leads me | to such sinister state,
That I do waste with others' love | that hath myself in hate;
And he that beats the bush | the wishéd bird not gets,
But such, I see, as sitteth still | and holds the fowling nets.

"The drone more honey sucks, | that laboureth not at all,
Than doth the bee to whose most pain | least pleasure doth befall;
The gardener sows the seeds | whereof the flowers do grow,
And others yet do gather them | that took less pain, I know;
So I the pleasant grape | have pulléd from the vine,
And yet I languish in great thirst | while others drink the wine.

"Thus, like a woeful wight, I wove my web of woe—
The more I would weed out my cares | the more they seem to grow;
The which betokeneth hope | forsaken is of me,
That with the careful culver climbs the worn and withered tree;
To entertain my thoughts, and there my hap to moan,
That never am less idle, lo, than when I am alone."

The poems which Lord Oxford contributed to this collection are, without exception, consistent with his personal character, for they are affected to a degree, conceited, antithetical and ambiguous, and, as Dr.

Percy has observed, "Perhaps it is no injury to his memory that few of his compositions are preserved for the inspection of impartial posterity." From the poem which I have quoted it will be seen that he was partial to the graces of alliteration, but I need scarcely add that it requires even more than these to constitute true poetry.

William Hunnis, another contributor, was a gentleman of the Chapel Royal under Edward VI, and subsequently, like Edwards, master of the Boys of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel Royal. His poems in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* amount to twelve. He was also the paraphrast of some of the Psalms of David, and actually rendered the whole of the book of Genesis into English metre, in a work entitled, *A Hyve full of Hunnye*, to which is annexed *A Handful of Honisuckles*, containing "The Poor Widow's Mite," and sundry dialogues and ditties of a religious character. "But," as Warton says, "his honeysuckle and his honey are now no longer delicious." Notwithstanding this severe criticism, and from such a high authority, I am inclined to rank the compositions which Hunnis has contributed to this collection as higher and more meritorious than any of his predecessors, with the exception of Edwards. Although they are all didactic, like the bulk of this collection, yet there is a thread of genial fancy running through them—a facility of expression, a croon of music, and a delicacy of sentiment, which certainly are not to be found in the poems of Lords Vaux or Oxford. Take, for example, the following lines, entitled:—

"If thou desire to live in quiet rest
Give ear and see, but say the best."

"*If thou* delight in quietness of life
Desire to shun from trials, debate and strife,
To live in love with God, with friend and foe—
In rest shalt sleep when others cannot so.

"*Give ear* to all, yet do not all believe,
And see the end, and then do sentence give;
But say, for truth, of happy lives assigned,
The best hath he that quiet is in mind."

The first two syllables in each line form a kind of acrostic of the title.

Again, in "Hope well and Have well."

"In hope the shipman hoisteth sail, in hope of passage good;
In hope of health the sickly man doth suffer loss of blood;
In hope the prisoner linked in chains hopes liberty to find;
Thus hope breeds health, and health breeds ease to every troubled mind.

"In hope desire gets victory, in hope great comfort springs;
In hope the lover lives in joy, he fears no dreadful things;
In hope we live, and may abide such storms as are assigned:
Thus hope breeds health, and health breeds ease to every troubled mind.

"In hope we easily suffer harm, in hope of future time,
In hope of fruit the pain seems sweet that to the tree doth climb;
In hope of love such glory grows, as now by proof I find,
That hope breeds health, and health breeds ease to every troubled mind."

I must also find room for a poem, entitled, "He repenteth his folly," in which he apostrophises his lady love, and which, with a few trivial alterations, might do duty for a latter-day love song:—

"When first mine eyes did view and mark thy beauty fair for to behold,
And when mine ears 'gan first to taste the pleasant words that thou me told,
I would as then I had been free from ears to hear and eyes to see.

"And when my hands did handle oft, that might thee keep in memory,
And when my feet had gone so soft to find and have thy company,
I would each hand and foot had been, and eke each foot and hand so seen.

"And when in mind I did consent to follow thus my fancy's will,
And when my heart did first relent to taste such bait myself to spill,
I would my heart had been as thine, or else thy heart as soft as mine.

"Then should not I such cause have found to wish this monstrous sight to see,
Nor thou, alas! that mad'st the wound should not deny me remedy;
Then should our will in both remain, to grant one heart which now is twain."

All that is known of our next contributor, Francis Kinwelmarsh, is that he was the intimate friend of George Gascoigne, and that, with the latter, he translated the *Iocasta* of Euripides, and that Warton highly commends the *Ode to Concord* by him, as "exhibiting great elegance of expression and versi-

fication." Kinwelmarsh was a member of Gray's Inn, and was better known as a translator than as a poet; he contributed ten poems to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, amongst which the following is at least worthy of quotation :—

"Who will aspire to dignity
By Learning must advancéd be."

"The poor that live in needy rate
By Learning do great riches gain;
The rich that live in wealthy state
By Learning do their wealth maintain.
Thus rich and poor are furthered still
By sacred rules of learnéd skill.

"All fond conceits of frantic youth
The golden gist of Learning stays;
Of doubtful things to search the truth
Learning sets forth the ready ways.
O happy him do I repute
Whose breast is fraught with Learning's fruit.

"There grows no corn within the field
That ox and plough did never till;
Right so the mind no fruit can yield
That is not led by Learning's skill.
Of ignorance comes rotten weeds,
Of Learning springs right noble deeds.

"Like as the captain hath respect
To train his soldiers in array,
So Learning doth man's mind direct
By Virtue's staff his life to stay.
Though friends and fortune waxeth scant,
Yet learnéd men shall never want.

"You imps, therefore, in youth be sure
To fraight your minds with learnéd things;
For Learning is the fountain pure
Out from the which all glory springs.

Whoso, therefore, will glory win
With Learning first must needs begin."

The contributor of eight poems to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, Jasper Heywood, son of John Heywood, the Dramatist and Epigrammatist, next claims our attention. He was born in London about 1535, graduated M.A. at Oxford in 1553, and died at Naples in 1598. For his extraordinary career I must refer you to Warton's *History of English Poetry*:[1] suffice it to say that his conscience preventing his adherence to the change of national religion, he entered the Society of Jesuits at Rome in 1562, and became subsequently chief of the Order of Jesuits in England, where he kept up great state. He was celebrated for his success in religious disputation, and he translated several of Seneca's plays. His poetical contributions to the collection we are now considering call for no detailed notice. I, however, select the following lines as an example of his style and character as a poet; they are entitled,

"LOOK OR[2] YOU LEAP."

"If thou in surety safe will sit,
If thou delight in rest to dwell,
Spend no more words than shall seem fit,
Let tongue in silence talk expel.
In all things that thou seest men bent,
See all, say naught, hold thee content.

"In worldly works degrees are three—
Makers, Doers, and Lookers-on;
The Lookers-on have liberty,
Both the others to judge upon.

[1] Vol. iii, p. 38.
[2] Ere.

Wherefore in all, as men are bent,
See all, say naught, hold thee content.

"The Makers oft are in fault found;
The Doers doubt of praise or shame,
The Lookers-on find surest ground—
They have the fruit set free from blame.
This doth persuade in all here meant,
See all, say naught, hold thee content.

"The proverb is not south and west,
Which hath be said long time ago,—
Of little meddling cometh rest,
The busy man ne'er wanted woe.
The best way is in all world's sent,[1]
See all, say naught, hold thee content."

For the Chief or Provincial of the Jesuits in England, the foregoing lines cannot be regarded as high-class poetry, and his seven remaining contributions to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* are, perhaps, neither better nor worse.

Of our next contributors, Richard Hill and D. Sand, nothing is known with the exception of a reference to them in Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie*, published in 1586, in which the author alludes to "their abundant skill in many pretty and learned works." I quote the following lines from the first-named, entitled *A Friendly Admonition.*

"Ye stately wights that live in quiet rest
Through worldly wealth which God hath given to you,
Lament with tears and sighs from doleful breast,
The shame and power that vice obtaineth now.
Behold how God doth daily proffer grace,
Yet we disdain repentance to embrace.

[1] Assent.

"The seeds[1] of sin do suck into the mind,
And cankered vice doth virtue quite expel;
No change to good, alas! can resting find,
Our wicked hearts so stoutly do rebel.
Not one there is that hasteth to amend,
Though God from heaven His daily threats do send.

"We are so slow to change our blameful life,
We are so pressed to snatch alluring vice,
Such greedy hearts on every side be rife,
So few that guide their will by counsel wise,
To let our tears lament the wretched case,
And call to God for undeserved grace.

"You worldly wights that have your fancies fixed
On slipper joy of terrain[2] pleasures here;
Let some remorse in all your deeds be mixed,
Whiles you have time let some redress appear.
Of sudden death the hour you shall not know,
And look for death, although it seemeth slow.

"Oh, be no judge in other men's offence,
But purge thyself, and seek to make thee free;
Let every one apply his diligence
A change to good within himself to see.
O God, direct our feet in such a stay
From cankered vice to shame the hateful way!"

To say the least and most that can be said, these lines contain some good advice, but little originality. The intentions of our author were evidently sincere; but it is to be feared that if he lived in our days he would still find such "A Friendly Admonition" as necessary as seems to have been the case in his own earlier times.

The name of "A. Bourcher" may be taken next,

[1] Seeds, from "seethe," to boil. "In the seeds" was an old phrase of being in difficulty, akin to the modern phrase "in hot water," to represent exposure to the seethings of passion.—HENRY MORLEY.

[2] Earthly.

although very little is definitely known about him. He only contributes one poem to the present collection, and this is contained in the appendix of poems added to the later editions. He is said to have versified one of Æsop's Fables in 1566, and to have written a poem to the reader, prefixed to Whitney's *Emblems*. I quote his *Golden Precepts* because of its archaic daintiness, which might be compared to an antique frame scintillating with the light from precious stones adorning it. It is withal modest, manly, and meritorious in its expressiveness, and I make no apology for quoting it here in its entirety :—

"Perhaps you think me bold that dare presume to teach,
As one that runs beyond his race and rows beyond his reach :
Sometimes the blind do go | when perfect sights do fall,
The simple may sometimes instruct | the wisest heads of all.

"If needful notes I give | that unto virtue tend,
Methinks you should of rights vouchsafe | your listening ears to lend :
A whetstone cannot cut, yet sharp it well we see,
And I, though blunt, may whet your wit, | if you attentive be.

"First these among the rest | I wish you warely heed
That God be served, your Prince obeyed, and friends relieved at need ;
Then look to honest thrift, both how and what to have,
At night examine so the day | that bed be thought a grave.

"Seek not for others' goods ; be just in word and deed,
For got with shifts are spent with shame—believe this as thy creed ;

Boast not of Nature's gifts, nor yet of parents' name,
For virtue is the only mean | to win a worthy fame.

"Ere thou dost promise make, consider well the end,
For promise passed be sure thou keep, both with thy foe and friend:
Threat not revenge too much—it shows a craven's kind,
But to prevail and then forgive | declares a noble mind.

"Forget no friendship's debt, wish to requite at least,
For God and man, yea, all the world, condemns the ungrateful beast:
Wear not a friendly face | with heart of Judas' kiss,
It shows a base and vile conceit, and not where valour is.

"Fly from a fawning flirt, and from a cogging mate,
Their love breeds loss, their praise reproach, their friendship breeds but hate:
Seek not to loose by wiles | that law and duty binds,
They be but helps of bankrupt's heads, and not of honest minds.

"The motions of the flesh and choler's heat restrain,
For heaps of harms do daily hap where lust or rage doth reign.
In diet, deeds, and words a modest man is best—
Enough sufficeth for a feast, but riot finds no rest.

"And so, to make an end, let this be borne away—
That virtue always be thy guide, so shalt thou never stray."

I can only hope that you will endorse the high opinion I have formed of the foregoing lines, but whether or not, I must express my earnest conviction that the duty of Man towards his God and his fellow-men—in a word the truest and highest philosophy of life, has never, with comparatively few exceptions, and these from much loftier sources, been more pithily or comprehensively expressed.

The name of Lodowick Lloyd also appears as that of the author of an *Epitaph on Sir Edward Saunders*, and this, also, is included in the appendix. Lloyd was a distinguished courtier of Queen Elizabeth, and held the position of Sergeant-at-Arms. He was, moreover, the author of numerous poems, published between 1586 and 1607, a list of which will be found in *The British Bibliographer*.[1] As the epitaph in question is verbose and pedantic, I pass it over without quotation.

Barnabe Riche is the name of the last contributor to this collection of whom any definite knowledge is forthcoming. Although he appears to have been the author of numerous prose works, the titles of which have been enumerated by Mr. Haslewood in the work mentioned above, he seems to have been almost as little appreciated by his contemporaries, as they are unknown to modern writers. So far as can be definitely determined, he, like Lloyd, only contributed one poetic effort to our *Paradise*, and curiously enough this, too, is an epitaph, and appears also in the appendix. It is entitled, *An Epitaph upon the death of Sir William Drury, Knight, Lord Justice and Governour of Yreland, deceased at Waterford, the thyrd of October, An. Do.* 1579. This is only interesting from the light it throws on a question of authorship, as to the writer who contributed several poems to the *Paradise*, which are signed *my lucke is losse*. The tenth stanza of Riche's Epitaph is as follows:—

[1] Vol. iii, Preface, p. 19.

"But Ireland thou, thou thrice-accursed soyle,
Thy lucke is losse, thy fortune still withstoode.
What mischiefe more, to worke thy greater spoyle,
Then loss of him that ment thee greatest good:
Yet canst thou say Syr *Druries* noble name
In Ireland still shall bide in lasting fame."

From the expression *Thy lucke is losse* in these lines, it seems probable that the poems bearing the signature *my lucke is losse* may have been really written by Riche, who would be a young man in 1576, when the *Paradise* was first published, and he may have been disinclined to put his own name to them in consequence of his youthful modesty. Of course this is all conjectural, but I cannot believe that he would have used this expression in his poem in the appendix without having had some personal claim to the almost identical words appended to the five poems in the first edition of the work, which, however, call for no particular notice.

In addition to those already alluded to, we find the names of M. Bew, M. Thorn, J. Marshall, G. Gaske, and M. Candish. Bew contributes five poems, Thorn two, and the others one each. Nothing, however, is really known of any of these writers, and there is nothing in their poetic efforts to justify any special comment. It has been surmised by Mr. Park that "G. Gaske" may represent George Gascoigne. I don't think, however, that the latter could ever have perpetrated such a couplet as the following—the concluding lines of a poem entitled, *A Description of the World*:—

"Save only man, who as his earthly time is
Shall live in woe, or else in endless bliss."

Our next group consists of nine contributors, whose names can only be surmised from the initials appended to their respective poems, but of whom nothing is really known. One of these poems is signed *Q. Yloop*, whereas on the title-page it appears as *M. Yloop*. It has been stated that *Yloop* stands for *Pooly*, spelt backwards; but even this helps us very little, although it has been conjectured that the author may have been a person named *Pooley*, who contributed to Yates' tripartite collection of poems, which appeared in 1582.

One poem bearing the initials "*F. G.*" is supposed to have been written by Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brocke. Another, with the initials "R. D." may have been written by Robert Dillington, the author of introductory verses in Lewkenor's *Resolved Gentleman*, published in 1599. The same initials are appended to some other poems of an earlier date, viz., 1585 and 1586.

"M. D." have been thought to represent Mr. Dyer or Mr. Dolman, and "E. S." no less a person than Edmund Spenser, who was about 23 years of age when *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* was first published; but judging from the internal evidence of the five poems bearing these initials, the statement at most is a very improbable surmise.

The author of a few poems to which the initials "F. M." are appended, is quite unknown and unidentified. "R. L." are the initials borne by *certaine sonnets* published in 1596, also by a sonnet in Drayton's *Matilda* in 1594. The author is, however, only known as *R. L., Gentleman.*

Ritson supposes the initials "M. S." as designat-

ing Mr. Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, and Earl of Dorset, but without any shade of probability; and "H. D." are the initials at the end of some lines on the death of Master John Barnabe, who died in 1579. Nothing further is known of the author.

Two poems, entitled *A Complaint* and *A Reply*, are respectively signed "Troylus" and "Cressida," but their author is completely unknown. The remainder of the collection consists of eight poems to which neither initials nor signatures are appended, but none of these demand any detailed attention. Of these poems, however, which appeared as anonymous in the first edition, several had authors' names appearing in subsequent editions, amongst which are those of Thomas Churchyard, J. Marshall, and W. Hunnis.[1]

Having thus far taken an inventory of the contents of *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, I may be permitted to state, before appraising their literary value, that the little volume went through at least seven editions, from 1576 to 1600, viz., the first in 1576, second in 1577, third in 1578, fourth 1580, fifth 1585, sixth 1596, and seventh 1600. Yet another edition, resembling very much the last edition of 1600, but without date, was "printed by Edward Allde for Edward White, dwelling at the little North dore of Saint Paule's Church, at the signe of the Gunne." Cibber, in his life of Jasper Heywood, alludes to an edition in 1574, but this is evidently a mistake. Warton, also, in his *History*

[1] T. Churchyard: *He persuadeth his friend, &c.*, p. 18. J. Marshall: *Though Fortune have, &c.*, p. 31. W. Hunnis: *No foe to a flatterer, &c.*, p. 59.

of English Poetry[1] refers to an edition in 1573, but this is also very improbable, and Steevens and Herbert regarded it as a typographical error for 1578, which is probably the true explanation.

That *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* was, however, most popular is incontestably proved by the numerous published editions, and in comparing these with each other, it is curious to find that a few of the signatures have been altered in later editions, although by what authority does not appear. Still more strange is the fact that in the edition of 1576 (the first) there are eighteen poems which are not included in that of 1580; in that of 1580, eighteen poems which are not in that of 1576, and five poems which are not in either of the editions of 1596 or 1600; and in those of 1596 and 1600, seven poems which are not in that of 1580. Stranger than all is the fact that, so far as I have been able to ascertain, almost all these alterations consist of a mere "ringing of the changes" of the authors represented in the first edition, and in scarcely one instance have I found a new name, or new initials of any kind. It would thus appear that, in the minds of those who edited the subsequent editions, only those authors who had contributed to the earlier were worthy of appearing in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* under any circumstances, and that their editorial labours consisted simply in a reshuffling and fresh selection of the original authors' poetic efforts. Be this as it may, the fact remains, and I

[1] Vol. iii, p. 388.

have felt constrained to thus direct attention to it.[1]

Tottel's Miscellany was the first collection of English poems written by different authors, and was so popular that it went through six editions in seven years, and was honoured by the patronage of Shakespeare, as we have seen. *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* was, strictly speaking, the second collection of a similar kind, and was almost equally popular, having, so far as we know accurately, gone through seven editions in twenty-four years. These two small volumes evidently met a demand of the times in which they appeared, for they contained an almost infinite variety of poems, concerning life and its sorrows and vicissitudes, written in graceful verse, interwoven here and there with genial fancy, and were peculiarly suitable for distracting and comforting the minds of all classes during the trials, turbulency, and uncertainty of the period when they were accessible. At such seasons of depression and despondency it does not require the mighty efforts of genius to give consolation to sorrowing hearts and wounded spirits, or to alleviate the anxiety of overwrought minds, but rather aptness of sentiment and appropriateness of precept, expressed in simplicity of language, and associated with lyrical grace and tenderness. All these are to be found in these two admirable collections of verse; and as their variety captivated their readers, so by their sweetness, simplicity, and moral fervour they were peculiarly calculated to pleasantly while away

[1] The only exceptions are the signatures "Candish," "Troylus," and "Cressida," and the initials "M. S." in edition of 1580.

an occasional hour, and to make their readers temporarily forget the dangers, insecurity, and anxieties by which they were surrounded. It is thus, at all events, that I venture to account for the popularity they attained.

We have already seen that during the fifteenth century poetic genius was dormant in England; and this can easily be accounted for by the unsettled state of the country—by the wars of the Roses, and the religious controversy which had been ushered in during the previous century by Wycliffe—the Morning Star of the Reformation. Towards the end of the fifteenth century (1471) the art of printing was introduced into England by William Caxton, and thus afforded novel and pre-eminent facilities for the advancement of English literature; but little real progress was made, notwithstanding the spirited efforts of Lord Surrey, until the last quarter of the sixteenth century. And when we remember the five or six direful years of Mary's reign, about the middle of the sixteenth century (during which the majority of the poems in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* were written), we need have no misgivings as to the character of the period, or its baneful influences upon the hearts and minds of the people.

Nearly all the poems in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* are, as we have seen, of a didactic character; *i.e.* they belong to a class of poetry upon which the perceptive powers of the poet are brought to bear, and in which moral precepts are inculcated. The ultimate object of all poetry is, or should be, to produce some beneficent or useful mental impression, either directly or indirectly: if the latter, by means

of narrative, fable, or character representation; and if the former, by a specific and openly expressed intention of carrying out certain aims,—as in didactic poetry, where the sole object is to convey moral precepts or instruction in an agreeable manner, by means of metrical forms, while the fancy is detained by descriptive episodes and vivid coloration, and the teaching is thus implanted more deeply in the garden of memory. While the professed object is thus to teach and to instruct, the poet must be careful that the thoughts which he expresses are sound and healthy, that his principles are just and reasonable, and that his illustrations are apt and clearly expressed. He must, moreover, be capable of so animating his teaching that the imagination may be diverted and engaged, while the prosaic character of his subject is concealed by means of poetical embellishment; in a word, to make a didactic poem attractive, the poet must amuse and relieve the mind of his reader by making the principal subject ancillary to the agreeableness of his episodes, and the fluency and sweetness of his numbers.[1]

Didactic poetry usually assumes one of two varieties: the first, and highest, wherein we find a regular and sustained treatise on some subject of philosophy or ethics,—as, for example, Lucretius's *De Rerum Naturæ*, Virgil's *Georgics*, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, or Boileau's *Art of Poetry;* whereas in the second variety we find a moral precept or precepts enshrined within the lyrical form of poetry like a

[1] Vide *Blair's Lectures*, p. 542 (1838).

kernel within a nut—a moral truth crystallised between a gleam of fancy and a rill of music.

It is to this latter variety that the poems in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* belong; and although we cannot associate them with even the higher classes of didactic poetry, yet they have a charm and interest of their own which cannot be gainsaid.

In the first place, they are "exceedingly valuable as specimens both of language and sentiment. They are, for the most part, in a style of simplicity which shows that our ancestors, wherever genius predominated over mere scholarship, had arrived at a better taste, and possessed a more easy flow and more skilful command of words, and such as more nearly approached to modern usage, than is generally supposed."[1] Indeed, when we recollect the time, and the circumstances in which they were written, we cannot but be struck by the poetical taste which they manifest; while the gracefulness of their rhythm, the melody of their versification, and their choice of language are really admirable.

These poems are also valuable as representing (in addition to *Tottel's Miscellany*, and the poems of Occleve, Lydgate, Barclay, Hawes, Skelton, and Tusser, and the *Induction* and *Complaint* in the *Mirror for Magistrates*) the whole of English poetical literature written during the century and a half which intervened between Chaucer and Edmund Spenser. It may not be—*it is not*—literature of the highest class, but it is all we have to show during this eventful period in our literary history. During the fifteenth century we have only the poems of

[1] Sir Egerton Brydges, *Preface, opus cit.*

Occleve and Lydgate and a few ballads to represent English verse, although in Scotland the national muse was active and flourishing. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the spread of the art of printing had given a new impulse to every class of letters, and the spirit of reform was quickened by the diffusion of culture.

In Italy, Ariosto was following in the footsteps of Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Lorenzo de Medici, and hither the young nobles and courtiers of England wended their way, and brought home with them Italian fashions, while their minds were influenced by Italian wit and poetry. Men of culture in England who had no desire to be regarded as men of letters, not only wrote but sang their *vers de société*, and, indeed, it was considered an evidence of good breeding to be able to write pleasant verse in accordance with the prevailing Italian fashion.

By referring briefly to Tottel's collection and the *Paradise*, we readily see that the contributors to both are either noblemen or men of distinction about the Court. Thus amongst the former we find the names of the Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Lord Vaux, Edward Somerset, John Heywood, Sir Francis Bryan, and Nicholas Grimald; and amongst those in the latter, Lord Vaux, the Earl of Oxford; Richard Edwards, William Hunnis, both Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal; Jasper Heywood, Lodowich Lloyd, afterwards Sergeant-at-Arms to Queen Elizabeth, and others: and thus we see that the poems in these two collections were the result of a literary reawakening among persons of culture and position at the time they were written.

As Mr. J. P. Collier says, "everybody at all acquainted with the history of our literature will be well aware of the value of all these productions, which may be looked upon as the earnest revival of a true taste for poetry, after a dreary century between the death of Chaucer and the birth of Surrey."[1]

The indefatigable Mr. Arber, in his Prologue to *Tottel's Miscellany*, says, "The immense quantity of English verse that was *written* between 1530 and 1600 is probably far beyond the conception of most readers of our literature. The *printed* poetry, whether it appeared as the production of a single poet or in the shape of Poetical Collections (not to speak of the innumerable commendatory verses prefixed to prose works), constitute the bulk of all the publications of that time."

But to return to the more immediate consideration of *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*. In this collection of poems the themes are varied only within certain very definite limits, and consist for the most part of ethical truisms concerning the duplicity and capriciousness of human affections, the falsity and fickleness of human friendship, the illusory character of human hopes and pleasures, and the gloomy realities of human life and character. There is, moreover, a prevailing tone of pessimism amid them all which makes their perusal monotonous, until relieved, as frequently happens, by chords of genuine and sympathetic pathos. This gloomy morality can easily be understood when we remember the bigotry, bloodshed,

[1] Pref. to *Seven Engl. Poets' Misc.*, 1867.

and intolerance of Queen Mary's reign, during which there was, indeed, little justice or security for the lives or property of her subjects. The following titles, chosen almost at random, and in addition to those already quoted, will give a fair idea of the nature of the poems:—"The perfect tryall of a faythfull friend;" "No pleasure without some payne;" "Our pleasures are vanities;" "Finding worldly ioyes but vanities, he wysheth death;" "Being trapped in Love, he complayneth;" "All things are vain;" "Findynge no ioye, he desireth death;" "The fruites of friendes," and so on.

Notwithstanding, however, their comparative lack of variety and of imaginative brilliancy, there are poems in this collection which would do credit to any era of English literature, for the earnestness of their feeling, and the vigour with which this is expressed. The writers evidently felt what they wrote, and out of the fulness of their hearts they inculcated the precepts they sought to teach. There is, indeed, but little imagination, but this shortcoming is compensated for by the earnestness of purpose, the intensity of feeling, and withal the culture which are evidenced in every one of them; and more we cannot expect when we consider the period of their production.

It would be absurd to highly rate the general poetical merit of these collections of verse; but what must strike every one who is competent to form an opinion regarding them is the standard they frequently reach. Some of the writers are quite unknown, yet we often find in their work evidences of the genuine spirit of poetry which

are occasionally lacking altogether in other and more important periods, and we can only rest assured that the spirit of poetry was surely, if slowly, rising in the England of these years.[1]

If we institute a comparison between these poems and those written during the latter decades of Queen Elizabeth's magnificent reign—between, for example, *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* and *England's Helicon*,—the former is found woefully deficient in the delicacy of fancy, the spontaneity and imaginative fervour which characterise the lyrics and pastorals of the latter collection. In the one culture has bred poetic taste, but in the other taste has developed into the brilliancy of genius; yet the one paved the way for the other, even as the soil has to be prepared ere the delightful flowers bloom amid the joys of summer.

It is interesting to find that every poem in the collection affords evidence of studious alliteration. Indeed, to such an extent is this the case, that Hallam, alluding to Hunnis—a generous contributor,—considers that he should be placed as high as Vaux or Edwards; "but too often," he adds, "he falls into trivial morality and a ridiculous excess of alliteration." At all events, if these be faults, they are shared at least by all the minor poets of the age.

English literature owes a debt of gratitude to the compilers of these Miscellanies, for to them is due the preservation of these poems. As they appear in *Tottel's Miscellany* and *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* a great part of them are posthu-

[1] *Elizabethan Literature*, Saintsbury, p. 26.

mous, many of the writers having been dead for years before the publication of these two collections. Thus in 1557, when the first edition of *Tottel's Miscellany* was published, Lord Surrey had been dead ten years; Sir Thomas Wyatt, fourteen; Sir Francis Bryan, eight; and Lord Rochford—a probable contributor,—twenty-one years; and it is highly probable that many of them were written as early as 1527. With regard to the writers in *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, Lord Vaux had been dead eighteen or nineteen years when the first edition was published in 1576, and Richard Edwards, the compiler himself, had been dead ten years.

These poems, however, notwithstanding their trivial and sometimes commonplace character, are entitled to be regarded as the heralds of the poetical revival which took place later in the century; and since the majority of them were written simply for the amusement of their authors, and without any intention as to their being published, we must esteem them as so many evidences of the poetical taste which the cultured classes of England were gradually introducing from Italy, the light of the old pre-eminent civilisation she had still maintained throughout the Middle Ages. When the civil wars of England were over, and she felt inclined to resume her literary culture, she, like all other European countries, turned to Italy for instruction and enlightenment, and thus Wyatt and Surrey introduced a new era in English poetry, characterised by such a refined and dignified expression of thought—such harmony, directness, and perspicuity—as were then unknown; and to them

belongs the credit of leavening Elizabethan poetry with the subtle sweetness of Italian versification.

Admitting, therefore, that the poetry of the first half of the sixteenth century was far inferior to that of the latter half, it should at the same time be remembered that the former period was rather an era of education,—a period in which culture was evolved by means of translations and the study of the best models attainable, and that, within this period, the poetic inspiration was generated which in later years filled this England of ours with song. As Sir Egerton Brydges has truly said, "the progress of the human mind in the polish of language, as well as in the refinement of opinion, is surely among the most important of philosophical inquiries. What can better exhibit it than a series of those poetical compositions which were most popular in their day? Here are shown all those forms of expression which are most laboured into nicety and elegance. Here are displayed all those feelings which intellectual cultivation had most drawn forth."[1]

To this I would only add that these Miscellanies mark a period of intellectual quickening and activity in English literary history, and that the poems which they contain were the seed from which upsprung the splendid growths of after years, and from which eventually was evolved the glorious bloom of Elizabethan song.

But the flight of time reluctantly compels me to conclude.

Let us retrace our steps from *The Paradise of Dainty Devices!*

[1] *Opus cit.*, Preface, p. xxiii.

POSITIVISM IN LITERATURE.

BY PERCY W. AMES, F.S.A., F.R.G.S.,

Secretary, R.S.L.

[Read November 28th, 1894.]

WE sometimes hear our clerical friends remark that the duty which they like the least is choosing a text, and the writer of papers experiences a similar difficulty. Usually the subject comes to him, or papers would scarcely be written; but the naming of the production is often a serious matter.

Among the unwritten laws defining the duties of a Secretary is one that imposes upon him the task of supplying a paper on short notice to fill an unexpected vacancy. Finding myself recently in this position, and glancing despondently over a list of subjects I had drawn up with the intention of inducing some one else to write upon them, the historical order of their arrangement suggested some reflections upon the very different degrees of boldness and independence of spirit which characterised the various periods and schools. Between the authors in the Dark Ages, when scarcely a single writer in Europe had the courage or the ability to think for himself, and those of the last two centuries, during which the spirit of inquiry has invaded every subject, and fearlessly doubted and questioned every doctrine handed down by tradition, in Politics, Science, and Religion, the difference

is so extreme that it at once arrests attention and suggests an interesting subject of inquiry.

How is it that the great change has come about? this emancipation from the thraldom of Tradition and Authority, this independence out of the debilitating influence of Patronage? Is it to be ascribed to the growth of the new scepticism, science, and democracy? Eloquent advocates may make out a strong case for all these. In the present paper I venture to point out the part played by Positivism, which includes scientific scepticism and something more than this.

I do not think any apology is necessary for introducing this subject to the Royal Society of Literature. Considering that Philosophy is one of the subjects on which the duty of writing papers is imposed upon us in the charter, it is remarkable how little attention has been paid to it. While papers have been very numerous on Philology, Ancient History, Classical Archæology, and the Arts, those on philosophical subjects do not number half a dozen in the seventy years of the Society's existence. When we reflect on the undeniable influence modern philosophy has exerted upon European thought, in every department of intellectual inquiry, some explanation seems rather to be needed of our previous neglect. If we take the "term Literature in its primary sense of an application of letters to the records of facts or opinions"[1] we may readily allow the fitness of an attempt under the auspices of this Society to embody the results of observations of that influence.

[1] Mure's *History of the Literature of Greece.*

I am aware of the objections to employing the term Positivism as descriptive of scientific philosophy, but I think they are outweighed by certain advantages. The principal objection is that it was introduced by, and is always connected with, Auguste Comte, whose practical contributions to the new philosophy are found, on close examination, to be less numerous and valuable than was at one time thought, the great bulk of his doctrines having been rejected by scientific men, and his predictions unverified by time. How he is regarded by the scientific men of to-day is indicated in the following amusing passage by Professor Huxley. He says, "It has been a periodical source of irritation to me to find M. Comte put forward as a representative of scientific thought, and to observe that writers whose philosophy had its legitimate parent in Hume or in themselves were labelled Comtists or Positivists by public writers, even in spite of vehement protests to the contrary. It has cost Mr. Mill hard rubbings to get that label off. And I watch Mr. Spencer as one regards a good man struggling with adversity, still engaged in eluding its adhesiveness, and ready to tear away skin and all rather than let it stick."[2]

This confession unmistakably shows that the method and work of these distinguished men are inseparably associated in the public mind with something understood to be Positivism. And since that term is capable of conveying a more precise idea than New Philosophy, I hold that its employment is justified. We will accept the name, then,

[2] *Scientific Aspects of Positivism.*

but discriminate with regard to the other bequests of Auguste Comte, rejecting without hesitation those curious schemes of polity and ritual which, as Mr. A. J. Balfour happily puts it, "have tried the fidelity of his disciples and the gravity of his critics."

Positivism was intended by Comte to be a system of thought which aims at the unification of knowledge by the universal application of scientific method, and, when completed, harmonises our intellectual faculties, our social sympathies, our æsthetic feelings, and our moral sense.

I propose, however, to treat it chiefly as an intellectual instrument—a method of inquiry. What Euclid is to mathematics, so is Positivism to the whole realm of knowledge. I shall endeavour to point out its evolution through various stages, by noticing the contributions of philosophers, and attempt to show in what sense and to what extent the Positive Philosophy may be accepted concurrently with the belief in a Supreme Being who controls and directs the universe; and finally deal with the part it plays in the literature of to-day.

M. Renan observed that "Philosophy has hardly made a mark on the history of the world. The few have listened to her, the many have drifted down the valley perilous of instinct and of delirium." Without accepting as correct this description of the direction in which the human mind has proceeded, there can be little doubt that from the many philosophy has received scant attention, and we may safely conclude therefrom that there is something essentially incompatible between the notions that have prevailed in the successive philo-

sophic systems and the predominant ideas that have regulated modern progress, and a little consideration of the natures respectively of these soon reveals the cause.

Among the many striking characteristics of our age there is none more observable than its practical and utilitarian tendency. Almost the whole of its intellectual activity is displayed in the general spirit of inquiry, invention, and research, with the view to ameliorate and add pleasure to the conditions of life. And modern thought, trained under these circumstances and encouraged by the extraordinary developments in all the physical sciences and manufactures, is, on the whole, healthy and vigorous, and characterised by shrewdness and common sense. The only but very real danger in this tendency is that of animalising the measure and end of man's existence, and of allowing the worship of the god of utility to rob life of its higher significance and solemnity. It is, however, this practical tendency which has led men to regard the old philosophies, based on metaphysical speculations, with almost contemptuous indifference. At the same time conditions are obtained for the growth of a new philosophy in accord with the spirit of the age, based upon definitely established knowledge and adapted to practical purposes.

Those who believe in the theory of continuity and direct filiation of ideas, in the parentage of the earlier to the later epochs of thought, are struck by what appears at first an essential difference, a difference in kind rather than in degree of development between Metaphysics, or what has generally been

understood as philosophy, and Positive Science. The spirit of the former is seen in the grandeur and audacity of its aspirations; it attempts to solve the mysteries of the universe. Baffled again and again it returns to the mighty struggle, and meets the same sad defeat. It seeks to pierce the impenetrable veil. Its reasoning, based upon pure assumptions, is circular in movement and no progress is made; we are no nearer to-day to the solution of those problems man set himself than at the beginning. As this became recognised metaphysical philosophy fell into general neglect.

The positive spirit recognising the definite limitations of human faculties seeks only the knowledge of natural laws, and contents itself with the process of patient observation of the constancies of co-existence and succession of phenomena. But these less ambitious aims and methods have been productive of astonishing improvement, steady and gradual but unmistakable and permanent.

This remarkable change is attributed to the positive mode of thought which, according to Auguste Comte, first appeared in the world at the time of the precepts of Bacon, the conceptions of Descartes, and the discoveries of Galileo. Still, although Positivism signifies something more than scientific method, yet the latter forms so essential a part of it, that we must look further back than the time indicated by Comte.

The true origin of Science has been referred by Dr. Draper[3] to the establishment of the Mathematical and Practical Schools of Alexandria. The

[3] *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science.* Lond., 1885.

minds of the observant and impressionable Greeks, hitherto contented with meditation and profitless speculation, were stimulated to a high degree of activity by their experiences in the marvellous campaigns of Alexander. Not only the new scenes and customs and people, but the new knowledge and religion which they encountered, enormously aided their intellectual development, and the Alexandrian schools and museum were the splendid and tangible result. Of course, astronomical observations and the study of mathematics had been conducted long before in China, India, and Mesopotamia, but scientific investigation implies more than mere observation of facts; it means the experimental search for them also, and, by meditation upon them guided by mathematical reasoning, the discovery of general principles. This practical interrogation of Nature so characteristic of Modern Science was systematically begun for the first time in the history of the world, so far as we know, at the Alexandrian Museum. But this early application of Aristotelian induction, instead of being adhered to and perfected, was neglected, and followed in Europe by the long disputations of Scholasticism.

The renaissance of Science was directly due to the revival of the method of induction, and this is commonly attributed to Francis Bacon. It is no doubt true that its effective revival was owing to the persistence and the abundance of Bacon's writings, but in the interests of truth the work and writings of a great man, who lived 100 years before Bacon, should be mentioned. It was Leonardo da

Vinci who proclaimed the fundamental principle that experiment and observation are the only reliable foundations of reasoning in science, that experiment is the only trustworthy interpreter of Nature, and is essential to the ascertainment of laws. The great importance of da Vinci in the progress of scientific thought is still more apparent if we examine his actual attainments and discoveries. "He established," says Dr. Draper, "the three fundamental laws of dynamics known as the Laws of Motion. He gave a clear exposition of the theory of forces applied obliquely on a lever, and many other subjects and laws of Mechanics. He invented the camera obscura, discussed correctly several physiological problems, and foreshadowed some of the great conclusions of modern geology, such as the nature of fossil remains and the elevation of continents, and he explained the earth-light reflected by the moon."

On the other hand, we have to admit that Bacon was behind the scientific knowledge of his time. He knew nothing of Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood, nor of Kepler's calculations. He contemptuously rejected the Copernican system, and while Galileo was on the brink of his great telescopic discoveries, Bacon was publishing doubts as to the utility of instruments in scientific investigations. Further, he was quite ignorant of the utility of mathematics, and deprecated the extent to which they were employed in physical philosophy.[4]

[4] "I know not," he says, "how it has arisen that mathematics and logic, which ought to be the serving-maids of physical philosophy, yet affecting to vaunt the certainty that belongs to them, presume to exercise a dominion over her."

Bacon's correct description of heat as a mode of motion is certainly remarkable, but I cannot help surmising that it was a happy inspiration more resembling poetic insight than the laborious mode of ordinary scientific discovery. Bacon's philosophical error in declaring as an universal rule that the middle principles in every science should be arrived at by proceeding from the lowest to the highest, and that this order should never be reversed, thus excluding the discovery of new principles by deduction, is explained by J. S. Mill, who first drew attention to it, to be due to the non-existence in Bacon's time of a single deductive science such as mechanics and astronomy now are.[5] The same high authority also distinguishes another source of weakness in Bacon's method, in that all his rules tacitly imply the assumption that a phenomenon cannot have more than one cause.

I have only mentioned Bacon's scientific deficiencies with the object of arriving at an accurate estimate of what he actually contributed to scientific thought, and have no sympathy with any unworthy attempt to rob a great man of his just fame. We must examine the circumstances under which he laboured, and sift from his pardonable errors the gems of living truth discovered by him.

Bacon's chief aid to Positivism appears to consist in his forcible denunciation of the habit of spinning long deductions from principles assumed without sufficient examination, and in his insistence upon the systematic analysis and arrangement of inductive evidence, instead of simply accumulating instances

[5] Mill's *System of Logic.*

without any rule of selection. The distinction between ordinary induction and the method of Bacon is that the former proceeds *per enumerationem simplicem;* that is, by a mere enumeration of particular cases while the latter makes use of exclusions and rejections.[6]

Perhaps the best evidence of the value of Bacon's influence on scientific progress is derived from the testimony of the most distinguished men of his own and the subsequent age. Professor Fowler, in his work on Bacon,[7] gives a long list of men who bore this testimony, and furnished evidence of the impulse which he gave to scientific inquiry. From this list may be selected the names of Descartes, Gassendi, D'Alembert in France, Vico in Italy, Comenius and Leibnitz in Germany, and in England Wallis, Oldenburg, Hooke, and Boyle. Dr. Hooke referred to some method or engine to which he gave the name of Philosophical Algebra, by which the intellect was to be continually assisted in the pursuit of knowledge, and said, "Of this engine no man except the incomparable Verulam hath had any thoughts, and he indeed hath promoted it to a very good pitch."

Although strict inquiry into Bacon's works reduces within somewhat narrow limitations their practical utility, yet this by no means sums up the benefits of a study of his writings. No one can read Bacon's works without being deeply impressed by the extraordinary intellectual gifts of the great writer. His pre-eminent command of language

[6] *The Works of Francis Bacon.* By Spedding, Ellis and Heath.

[7] *English Philosophers—Francis Bacon.* By Thomas Fowler, 1881.

and facility in coining multitudes of new words, his minute and subtle knowledge of the nicest distinctions and finest shades of meaning, the richness, dignity, and power of his style, the wealth and brilliancy of his aphorisms, produce such a dazzling effect on the mind that it is almost impossible at first to form an impartial judgment of this superlative genius. It is not only the incomparable literary gifts which so impress the student, but his far-reaching knowledge of man, the lofty and commanding position he occupies, and from which he is able to survey, with god-like glance, at once the whole range of the mind's operations and to minutely observe the subtlest spiritual affinities. Moreover no one can doubt the purity of his motives and disinterested love of truth, which, indeed, are manifest throughout his whole works. Bacon always has been and will continue to be appreciated more by literary men than by scientific. Voltaire admired him extremely; Harvey had a contempt for him; and Dr. Whewell observes that he is quoted far more by metaphysical, ethical, and theological writers than by men of science.

The student of Positivism quickly perceives the important part played by philosophic doubt. In fact, all the most important forward movements, discoveries, enunciations of new truths, have admittedly been made by the so-called heretics in Science, viz. those men who have had the courage to doubt the doctrines of the great teachers. "The great use of Science," says Professor Huxley, "as an instrument of mental discipline, is its constant inculcation of the maxim that the sole ground on

which any statement has a right to be believed is the impossibility of refuting it." And scientific scepticism was undoubtedly first deliberately adopted and defined by Descartes. At the age of twenty-three, in opposition to all the potent influences to a contrary effect, he resolved upon independent inquiry, and clearly proclaimed his duty to be to learn what is true in order to do what is right. His guiding rule which enables a man to keep to the path which surely leads to Truth is: "Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted." The enunciation and first application of this great commandment of science has been called by Huxley the "consecration of doubt." Descartes, of course, taught far more than this, and much that has stood the test of time; but for our present purpose it is not necessary to mention more than that his observations upon consciousness were naturally followed by Kant's critical Idealism, which forms the basis of modern psychology.

The splendour and rapid march of the physical sciences are directly due to these successful efforts to define and make clear the method which Comte called the positive. The great defect in this scientific progress was considered to be the absence of any general doctrine. However exact each separate science may be, they do not of themselves constitute philosophy. As a rule, specialists in science display small capacity for either producing or apprehending general ideas. Comte pointed out (and Mr. Herbert Spencer entirely concurs in this opinion) the need

of a new order of scientific men whose function shall be to co-ordinate the results arrived at by the rest. It was in an attempt to meet this need that Comte founded a philosophy of the sciences. Whether his co-ordination be right or wrong may be a matter of opinion, but his presentation of scientific knowledge and method as a whole must tend to greatly enlarge the conceptions of those who study it.

Probably the best epitome of the Positivism of Comte is given by George Henry Lewes in his *History of Philosophy:*

"For the first time in history," he says, "an explanation of the world, society, and man is presented, and at the same time thoroughly in accordance with accurate knowledge; having the reach of an all-embracing system, it condenses human nature into a doctrine, and co-ordinates all the methods by which that knowledge has been reached, and will in future be extended. Its aim is the renovation of Society. Its basis is Science—the positive knowledge we have obtained and may attain of all phenomena whatever. Its method is the Objective Method, which has justified its supremacy to its results. Its superstructure is the hierarchy of the sciences,—that is, that distribution and co-ordination of general truths which transforms the scattered and independent sciences into one organic whole, wherein each part depends on all that precede and determines all that succeed."

It will thus be seen that the conception of the Positive Philosophy includes far more than the study of a number of scattered sciences. Its duty is to weld all these into one coherent body of doctrine, to point out their interdependence, and to arrange them in an ascending scale in which each

successive science shall depend on those which have gone before.

All classifications of the sciences are necessarily arbitrary. We do not observe any such arrangement in Nature, nor even any distinct lines of demarcation in the various phenomena. In ultimate analysis it is seen that no absolute separation is possible between the different groups of phenomena, which may all be regarded as branches of one trunk. We notice, however, increasing speciality in various directions, and between the extremest developments in these there are very obvious distinctions, and therefore these convenient divisions are possible. The accurate knowledge of the methods of Nature displayed in one group of phenomena constitutes a science. Each of these sciences has its own history; they have not grown together; some reached a degree of completeness and perfection, while others were still in a nebulous condition, and beyond these again were other phenomena so complex and bewildering that man had not yet ventured to seek any fundamental order, so little evidence was there of method on the surface. By Comte's time scientific researches had developed sufficiently, so far as all physical phenomena were concerned, for his purpose, but social matters were still untouched by scientific treatment. Before him no one had thought of a social science connected with the physical sciences, and investigated on the same method. Comte, firmly believing in the universality of order, of method, and of law, courageously sought regularity amidst the confusion of history and human life, and established the basis of a new

science. By his creation of Sociology the hierarchy of the sciences was complete. Of the value of this contribution of Comte, no doubt has ever been entertained, and, indeed, it would be difficult to exaggerate its importance to the intellectual life of mankind. It has elicited the warm admiration of the greatest living exponents of Science.

The next problem was to arrange these sciences in such a way that the very classification should itself be the expression of the most general fact apparent in the sciences themselves. Bacon, d'Alembert, Ampère, and others had before attempted a classification, thereby showing their appreciation of its necessity. Comte proceeds as follows. He first eliminates that class of speculations of such absorbing interest which deals with the practical applications of scientific knowledge. He only treats here theoretical science. Then, again, he separates those which are abstract and fundamental from the secondary sciences which arise out of them, and are concrete and descriptive. Biology, which deals with the physiological rules of life, the fundamental properties of the physical basis of life, irritability, automatism, metabolism, reproduction, &c., which in varying degrees are found associated with every living form, is abstract. Botany, Zoology, Histology, Embryology, &c., are its offspring; they are concrete, special, and descriptive. Physics, another fundamental science, is also the mother of a numerous family; Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Pneumatics, Acoustics, Optics, Heat, Electricity, and Magnetism are all products thereof.

Mathematics is regarded as the basis of the

Positive Philosophy rather than as a constituent part of it. Of the remaining sciences there are five which are abstract and fundamental. It is the discovery of an arrangement of these in a natural order which is one of Comte's remarkable achievements, and justly inspires very great admiration directly it is understood. It is a classification which is based upon a comparison of the phenomena treated in the respective sciences, and is one of such natural dependence that the study of each science implies the previous study of those below it in the scale. It thus represents both the objective dependence of the phenomena, and the subjective dependence of our means of knowing them.

The first in order is Astronomy, which deals with phenomena the most simple and the least complicated with others. Astronomical phenomena act on all others without being acted on by them. The second is Physics, that is molar physics, dealing with bodies in the mass, a science which has for its object the discovery of the general laws of the inorganic world, the phenomena of which influence all that follow, and are themselves influenced by celestial phenomena, as in the case of the tides and other effects. We have here to employ the senses of muscularity, touch, sight, and hearing, whereas in Astronomy sight alone was applicable. Also we have now to employ the art of experiment in addition to simple observation. The third is Chemistry, or molecular physics, whose more complex and special phenomena are modified by the general phenomena of weight, heat, light, &c. In Physics the state only of things is changed, but in Chemistry

both their state and nature; also the additional senses of taste and smell are now used. Fourthly comes Biology, the science of life, which is more complex than Chemistry, and is moulded and affected by all the preceding. Lastly, there is Sociology, the science of social existence and development, the phenomena of which are the most special, the most complex of all. They depend more or less on all the preceding ones without exercising any influence upon them. Between Astronomy and Sociology there is observed in the phenomena a gradually increasing degree of speciality, of complication and of individuality, as well as the character of successive dependence.

While this classification undoubtedly possessed an exaggerated importance and significance in the estimation of Comte and his early followers, it is equally certain that it does not merit the contempt and ridicule which have been poured upon it by others. The importance which fuller knowledge has since attached to molecular physics was, of course, not understood at the time of Comte. But no growth of science can destroy the interest and suggestiveness of his classification.

Its advantages may be briefly noticed. It will be perceived that the rational study of each of these fundamental sciences requires an acquaintance with all those that precede it in this arrangement. For example, the study of astronomical phenomena requires only the application of mathematical conceptions and a few very simple laws. But in the phenomena of terrestrial physics, in addition to the effects observable from the astronomical law of

universal gravitation we perceive certain other effects which are peculiar to them. If we examine the fourth science in the same way we observe that living bodies are subject to gravitation and other physical laws, to chemical action, and to the special phenomena peculiar to vitality. It is clear, therefore, that to properly pursue biological studies a previous knowledge of the preceding fundamental sciences is essential. So that to some extent the arrangement indicates the historical order of their progressive development. Astronomy is the most perfect, sociology is the least complete. The advantage of directing a scientific education according to the order of Physics, Chemistry, and Biology is now universally recognised.

Leaving this classification, we may now proceed to consider the so-called Law of the Three States. I may at once anticipate the obvious criticism that this belongs rather to an account of "Comtism" than to an exposition of the New Philosophy, but I think we may accept it for the light it throws on the evolution of scientific thought. It is thus expressed by John Stuart Mill:—"Comte conceives speculation to have, on every subject of human inquiry, three successive stages: in the first of which it tends to explain the phenomena by supernatural agencies; in the second, by metaphysical abstractions; and in the third or final state confines itself to ascertaining their laws of succession and similitude."

In the first of these states is observed the spontaneous exercise of the speculative faculty, and in which phenomena are believed to be variable and caused by some capricious Will. All nature is re-

garded in this stage as pervaded by spirits, demons, or deities of some kind, by whose action all effects are produced. Pestilence, tempest, earthquake, and all other inimical occurrences are believed to be caused by the anger and vengeance of the gods. Favorable phenomena evidence their pleasure and approval.

The second stage of metaphysical speculation is reached when men have begun to observe the *invariableness* of phenomena. They are now no longer attributed to the caprice of fictitious deities, but they are still regarded as effects produced by superadded agencies. In this stage men still persist in looking beyond the phenomena to the imagined causes, and the writings of the schoolmen are filled by speculations as to the nature of these. Belonging to this stage are the now exploded ideas of entities, inherent principles, sympathies, antipathies, &c.

In the final or positive state, phenomena are investigated simply as phenomena in their direct relations of association, whether simultaneous or successive, and without consideration of what they may be in themselves or in their inner nature. The positive method replaces all outlying agencies, whether fictitious deities or metaphysical entities, by positive laws, and since these laws are alone what can be known, they ought alone to constitute what is sought to be known.

One or two illustrations may make this clearer. Man's successive explanations of almost any phenomena would serve the purpose. Let us take those of tempest. In the volitional or supernatural stage thunder is attributed to the roaring of some god,

and any living creature killed by the lightning would be regarded as the victim of the god's anger. In the metaphysical stage the supposed thunder-god has disappeared, an abstract agency is substituted, but some intention or motive is still imagined in the thunder crash, such as Nature's horror of a vacuum. In the positive stage, external volition, as well as the notion of some inherent, personified abstraction, has disappeared from men's minds, and the given fact is explained simply by reference to some more general fact; thunder is recognised as consequent upon a displacement of air by a discharge of electricity.

Let us observe the progress of Astronomy. Here, again, in the supernatural stage we see the tendency to interpret the phenomena according to human analogies. If the light of day is obscured by an eclipse, the explanation that some dragon has swallowed the sun is unhesitatingly accepted. An eclipse of the moon made the Hindus think it was being eaten by an enemy called Rahu, and the savages of Nootka Sound say that it is a great cod-fish trying to devour it. A less gross example is the belief that a peculiar conjunction of the stars affects human destiny. In the metaphysical stage we observe the characteristic tendency to argue rather than to observe, to substitute some deduction for the plain record of a fact. Thus even Kepler felt it necessary to explain the regularity of planetary movements by assuming that the planets were endowed with minds capable of making observations on the sun's apparent diameter in order to regulate their motions so as to describe areas proportionate

to the times. In the positive stage men accept Nature as she presents herself, without seeking beyond the facts for fantastic entities or motives. It is the positive method alone which has perfected Astronomy and furnished explanations which we know to be correct, because they enable us to foresee and to predict with unfailing accuracy.

The distinction between the first and the subsequent stages may be clear enough, but there may be still some obscurity about the difference between the metaphysical and positive stages. Let us take, therefore, a further illustration suggested by George Henry Lewes. When some noxious ingredient is ejected from the human system, the metaphysical explanation is that Nature is working a cure; she is credited with a restorative principle, a *vis medicatrix*. If this explanation was a true one, we could rely upon it; but directly we attempt to do so, we are at once baffled by experiences which disprove it: as in the case when Nature does *not* eject the poison, but pumps it through the system, producing disease and death; or, again, as in the case of a parasitic fungus which Nature nourishes at the expense of a man's vitality. Where is the curative principle in such cases? The Positive method repudiates altogether the metaphysical idea of Nature, which it regards neither as physician nor assassin, but simply observes her methods without attributing motives or seeking hidden and mysterious causes.

Let us examine a finer distinction still, but one equally important, namely, the metaphysical and positive views of the Laws of Nature. It is in the metaphysical conception that the expressions are

employed, "contradictory to the Laws of Nature," and "breaking the Laws of Nature," and "obedience to a Law of Nature." Here, clearly, there is understood something beyond the facts, some superadded entity named *law*, which coerces the facts, directs and regulates them, and cannot be interfered with without peril. The Positivist again repudiates this idea. The Positive conception of Law is simply the observed order of facts without any element of causation beyond some antecedent fact, and this view of law is best expressed by the phrase Methods or Processes of Nature. There is nothing here assumed outside of or beyond the phenomena themselves; nor is the possibility of any breach or contradiction or any other disorder in Nature for a moment entertained.

It must not be supposed that the law of the three states implies that any human mind passes successively through these three states in respect to every subject at one and the same time. Comte expresses himself on this point so clearly that I will employ his own words. In the second volume of the *Positive Philosophy* (1st ed., p. 173) we read,—

"During the whole of our survey of the sciences, I have endeavoured to keep in view the great fact that all the three states may and do exist at the same time in the same mind in regard to different sciences. I must once more recall this consideration and insist on it, because in the forgetfulness of it lies the only real objection that can be brought against the grand law of the three states. It must be steadily kept in view that the same mind may be in the positive state with regard to the most simple and general sciences, in the metaphysical with regard to the more complex and special, and in the theological with

regard to social science, which is so complex and special as to have hitherto taken no scientific form at all."

We see from this that the same mind might recognise the orderly methods of Nature, say in Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, &c., hold metaphysical conceptions regarding the laws of the human body, and wholly fictitious conceptions of the facts of social life.

We may readily admit that Comte was much too absolute in his enunciation of this law, and in his declaration that every mind, with regard to every subject, passes through the three states in the order indicated. But although common experience disproves its claim to be of universal application, it nevertheless possesses a high suggestive value, and lends a new interest to the study of History.

It has been sometimes objected to on the erroneous idea that the positive state was practically a denial of God. This is not the case. Positivism is neither Agnosticism nor Atheism. There is a clear distinction between these two, however, which is important to notice, for while Agnosticism is not inconsistent with the positive method, Atheism is diametrically opposed to it. Mr. Huxley thus defines the former :—" Agnosticism simply means that a man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe." While it is by no means necessary for a Positivist in matters of science to be an Agnostic in matters of religion, yet it will be seen that Mr. Huxley's definition does not violate any principle of Positivism. But the dogmatic denial of a Creator implied in atheism is warmly repudiated by Comte,

and could certainly find no place in the Positive system. But the fact is that Positivism, so far as we have considered it, has nothing to do with religion. It relates solely to matters of science,—that is, man's explanations and studies of phenomena. The theological stage simply represents the tendency to attribute occurrences, of whose natural causes we are ignorant, to supernatural interferences, and the positive stage to base explanations on an exact view of the real facts of the case.

It is of the deepest interest, however, to inquire into the cause why the acquisition of scientific knowledge has, to some extent, been accompanied by a corresponding diminution in the belief in God. Let us put ourselves for a moment in the position of a man who has been deprived of an erroneous but maybe a cherished belief by a comparatively sudden revelation of the truth of a phenomenon. For a time at least, a mindless force to him has taken the place of an active Providence, and doubt and perplexity affect his mind. And the growth of science means a series of these processes whereby God seems pushed further and further out of our conceptions of the world of Nature, while man competes more successfully with the forces which threaten him, by adopting the hypothesis of law and order, than by depending upon the Creator's special interference. For now, instead of relying upon prayers for fine weather or for rain, he observes cause and effect, and creates the science of meteorology, whereby he is able to foresee and arrange accordingly. In times of epidemics, educated people no longer regard the visitation as consequent

on the endowment of Maynooth Colleges, or as a punishment for other national sins, and try to propitiate the supposed anger of God, but proceed by examination of dairies and analysis of drinking-water to ascertain and then remove the cause themselves.

Enough has been said to indicate the mode in which extension of the conception of law tends to weaken the belief in God. How may this be explained, and how may the danger be averted? I think we may get an idea to this end from the law of the three states. It is, however, an application of it, I am bound to say, not contemplated by Comte. Let us suppose our conceptions in this, as in most other subjects, passing through the three states.

In the primitive state the conception of God is marred by the prevailing ignorance of His works, which are attributed to His caprice and spontaneous volition. He is believed to act in a variable manner analogous to that of a human will. In the transitional state these ideas are corrected by the discovery of invariability, but God is almost lost sight of. Entities called Laws have taken His place. These are assumed to be irresistible, and He is made to be the slave of His own creations. As the witty Frenchman said of Descartes, "he allows God a 'chiquenaude' in setting the universe in motion, and then leaves Him out of account altogether."[8] It is in this stage that men assume that they know enough of Nature to pronounce confidently on the physical impossibility of miracles, and in which they

[8] Malebranche or Voltaire.

assign limitations to the regions and subjects of prayer. In the final state the idea of domineering laws has disappeared, and man grows out of the vain habit of transcendental speculations as to the causes he himself has substituted, and acknowledging the definite limitations of his faculties, and the numerous fallacies to which reason and the senses frequently lead, gives up also the equally vain habit of pronouncing upon anything that it cannot be.

There is room for God once more. The orderly sequence of events in Nature is recognised simply as His regularised working. His true methods begin to be perceived in which Law is reconciled with the freedom of His will, perfect harmony exists between progress and order. He is no longer regarded as a helpless Fate lost in or obscured by independent arbitrary laws. The anatomy and physiology of Nature, that is the entire material and phenomena in the universe, form one consistent manifestation of God. No longer is He regarded as separate or apart from Nature, but as the creative principle thereof, residing in and permeating all that is. But the pure physicist, whose whole attention is taken up with the vestments and ritual of Nature, fails to find this religion of Nature, the beautiful but awful Omnipresence which every flower and every insect reveals. As de Maistre, the distinguished author of *Le Pape*, observes, "un peu de science nous éloigne de Dieu, beaucoup de science nous y ramène."

But is it reasonable that with any degree of increasing knowledge there should be declining faith?

When men believed that the earth was a flattened plain, that the sky, with its brilliant constellations, was a solid roof environing the earth above and constituting the floor of an upper sphere; when the ancient mountains and the pleasant hills, with their silent records of the past, were believed to be juggled into existence in a moment of time; when all the living creatures were supposed to come up out of the earth perfect with all their intricacies, through the operation of a mysterious fiat,—with these rude ideas of Cosmogony, Astronomy, and Biology, our ancestors could yet marvel at the wisdom displayed, and, like the Bedouin in the desert, trace the footprints of the Creator in all around them.

But with the fuller light thrown on the external world by the torch of science there is not less, but more to excite deep wonder and to inspire intelligent reverence. The earth is not fixed nor flat, nor the centre of the universe, but a mere point in space. The "blue wilderness of interminable air," to the dim eyes of ignorance a solid roof, is seen to be "the immeasurable heavens broken open to their highest." The rocks have unlocked their secret, and revealed the history of their formation by slow cooling and condensation, forming elevations and depressions in the stratified crust of the earth. Observations of the plasticity of the different species of animals and plants, of the obvious bonds of relationship between them, of the history of their individual development, and many other considerations, have led inductively to the comprehension of the beautiful scheme of evolution. Surely with

these new conceptions, with this substitution of order and system, and unfolding progress for disorder and catastrophe and caprice, we can with greater reason and clearer understanding see that "the heavens declare the glory of God, and that the firmament showeth His handiwork."

It is not pretended that this conception of God is sufficient to satisfy the aspirations of the soul, or to serve as a true source of strength and joy and peace; but it is all that is revealed by external Nature. The religion which includes devotion to goodness as well as reverence, and the reverence which includes love as well as awe, arise from the contemplation of God in other aspects. But it is no part of my present duty to touch upon deeper analyses of religion. All I have sought to show is that the loss of the belief in God which sometimes accompanies increasing knowledge of the regularity of Nature may be regained by the positive conception of a law of Nature.

Positivism, that is the Philosophy of Modern Science, is in reality much more modest than its name implies. We sometimes hear of scientific objections to prayer. It cannot be too confidently asserted that whatever these objections may be, they are not scientific. Positivism does not teach opposition to prayer, whether in the nature of simple adoration or of specific petition. Religion and Positivism are distinct, but not antagonistic.

Another misapprehension of the subject is shown in the confusion of Positivism with Materialism. No one who understood the positive method could make such a mistake. Materialism is a form of

dogma as unwarrantable and gratuitous as Atheism. The discussion of Materialism *versus* Immaterialism, however interesting or important, relates to a subject which by its character is placed outside the range of positive inquiry, namely, the cause and nature and essence of thought. The positive philosopher observes the constant relation of concomitancy between cerebral processes and mental processes,—in other words, that the operations of thought are invariably accompanied by corresponding changes in the brain; but he does not occupy himself with the inquiry as to whether the brain changes cause the mind changes, or whether the action of the mind causes that of the brain, but steadily pursues the same course in psychological study as that which has successfully led him to positive knowledge in other departments.

It is a distinct departure from this method, however, which is observed in Comte's establishment of the Religion of Humanity. The philosophy is based on the objective method as alone conducive to development and progress. The religion rests on the purely subjective; and this, too, after Comte had contended that the subjective analysis of our ideas is an impossibility, and had emphatically declared that "in all subjects and under all circumstances the method is even more important than the doctrine itself."[9]

Hitherto patient observation has been the sole guide to doctrine, and metaphysical abstractions have been repudiated and condemned. Now criticism is prohibited, doctrines are stated dogmatic-

[9] *Philosophie Positive*, t. iv, p. 176.

ally, and the most refined abstraction is produced, namely, the "Great Being" made up of the totality of beings of the past, present, and future, who contribute towards the perfecting of the universal order, and this "collective life of Society" is set up to be worshipped through a rigid ceremonial. It is not necessary to multiply instances of the retrogressive character of Comte's social and religious systems.

But while noting the change of method and protesting against the adoption of catholic organisation into a scheme for the renovation of society, we gladly admit there is much beauty in the golden thread of altruism that runs through the religion of Humanity. Before dismissing Comtism we may acknowledge that a brave attempt has been made, and not altogether an unsuccessful one, to deal with the great problems of life—social, intellectual, moral, and practical—by making a scientific use of the continuity of human life, and feel also that by its aid, indirectly given, religion can become one with the highest science about the world and about man, and arise from its study with a serious sense of the responsibility of being entrusted with great truths, and under the bracing influence of hope feel impelled to join in the noble struggle for social regeneration.

Before proceeding now to consider the influence of the new scientific philosophy on modern literature it seems desirable again to collect in one definition the different elements of Positivism as employed in the present paper. We have seen, then, that it is a method and a system of thought. It limits itself to observation of all phenomena, physical and mental,

with the object of discovering general principles and laws, that is the orderly and natural sequence of events. To discover these it employs chiefly the methods and rules of scientific induction, and also, where suitable, the process of mathematical deduction. It entirely subordinates the authority of individuals to the revelations of Nature, and regards these as the highest criterion of Truth. It is engaged in the actual investigation of all that *is*, moved by disinterested devotion to Truth, and is therefore completely free from arrogance, dogmatism, and intolerance. Its scepticism, as in the primary meaning of the word, simply denotes the state of mind during examination, consideration, and reflection,—that is, the negation of dogmatism.

The active antagonism popularly associated with disbelief is an added meaning given to it. It is important that the distinction should be understood. There is a scepticism shown both in religion and philosophy which is very different from scientific scepticism. In religion it is characterised simply by the attractiveness of opposition, in philosophy by a discouragement of speculation, while the scepticism of Positivism is simply a philosophical instrument. A further distinction may be drawn by observing that the first is associated with an exalted value of opinion, and the second attaches chief importance to Truth. The former is disinclined to arrive at any conclusion, the latter is honestly desirous of doing so.

Now when we seek to know how all this growth of scientific conception and method has affected literature, we perceive that its influence is exhibited

in two ways; in the removal of conditions adverse to its free development, and also in the practical application of positive method. The first result is shown in literature generally, the second only in special departments.

The student of the history of literature cannot fail to observe the gradual mental emancipation manifested in modern times. The sense of freedom, elevation, and expansion of mind, the clearer atmosphere in which all writers now work, though still imperfect, marks an immense advance on earlier times, when every direction towards which the inquiring human spirit turned was narrowed or entirely obstructed by subjective obstacles created by prejudice, conventional habits, authority, or superstition; and this new condition is brought about by the philosophic modes of thought, an education chiefly due to the positive method. Literature had everything to gain by renouncing the trammels of authority, by emancipating herself from the restrictions of patronage. And the spirit of the literature of to-day possesses a bracing, refreshing, invigorating power, previously almost unknown. It gathers to itself and boldly treats every current topic and every opinion, reflecting with the accuracy of a polished mirror all the glancing lights thrown by the lively activity of unfettered thought, and presenting a counterpart to the charm of the naturalist's world with its infinite variety of form and colour. The writers of to-day, who enjoy the inheritance of genius, should courageously preserve the freest independence of spirit and cultivate the widest range of sympathy.

The departments of literature which have been most profoundly influenced by the positive method of treatment are History, Social Politics, and General Research. While Auguste Comte, as has been said, was the first to suggest the science of Sociology, its construction and development are due to Mr. Herbert Spencer. In describing his brilliant series of works as an application of Positivism to Sociology, Psychology, and Ethics, I must repeat that there is no suggestion of indebtedness to Comte, beyond using the name he applied to modern scientific treatment.

We have long been accustomed to the beneficent results in the material sphere of the advance of Science. She has carried her torch into the dark unknown, illuminating new districts, revealing unsuspected truths, and laying new worlds bare. In the competent hands of Mr. Herbert Spencer this torch has been similarly carried into the dark and shoreless region of metaphysical speculation ; and by the application of his sound biological knowledge to the hitherto fruitless analysis of the mind, gave form and direction, and therefore assured progress to a fascinating and important subject.

When we now turn to a consideration of Positivism in the great department of History, and seek the first attempt to base the history of man upon the sciences of the external world, we must again go back beyond the time of Comte, and in the first half of the eighteenth century we find the works of Montesquieu, which contain unmistakable evidence of a genuine attempt to employ what has been called since his day the positive method. Mon-

tesquieu was the first to seek the causes of historical movements in a series of antecedent events instead of in the action of conspicuous individuals. He showed that what were popularly supposed to be causes were but the occasions on which the real causes act. Again, he was the first to show how the character of any given civilisation is modified by the action of the external world. But while giving Montesquieu the just credit of having initiated the true method, which in consequence of the imperfection of physical science he was himself unable to carry out satisfactorily, we must acknowledge that the most splendid attempt to raise history to a level with other branches of knowledge was made by a man deeply imbued with the positive spirit, namely, Henry Thomas Buckle.

In the progress of each branch of human knowledge it may be observed that the conceptions of truth which seemed to stand out so clearly when first perceived by the light of science have to give place to others on later and fuller examination; therefore we may be prepared to find in the perfecting of a science of history many of Buckle's conclusions, however precisely stated and logically evolved, have to be modified later on, when extended knowledge enables new thinkers to give truer interpretations.

Probably the most remarkable and successful of recent applications of positive methods to the study of the problems of civilisation is the work of Dr. J. B. Crozier. Here we observe a mind comparable in intellectual power to the great leaders in physical science, thoroughly disciplined by positive habits of

thought, richly stored with knowledge of men and institutions and books, fertile in suggestion, and especially gifted in perceiving generalisations and in giving them precise expression. The literary gifts of this great thinker are of such a high order that, in addition to the solid contributions to the sum of human conceptions which he has made, we may count a profound influence on literature in aiding the growth of that precision of language and accurate and clear thought pre-eminently characteristic of Positivism. It would be disregarding all considerations of proportion to attempt to give in the present paper, however brief, an outline of this last application of science to the interpretation of civilisation. Suffice it to say that, so far as history is considered as an instrument of knowledge, although justly regarded as of immense importance in accounting for the present and correcting the deception of appearances, it is nevertheless subordinated into commentary, illustration, and appendage merely, while supreme importance is given to Insight into the Present, and knowledge of the Laws of the Human Mind in its entirety as a concrete whole.

It is impossible to speak of the modern treatment of history without referring to those distinguished men who have so greatly added to our knowledge of the events of history and of the stages of development of social and political institutions. Such gifted writers as Gibbon, Hume, Grote, Macaulay, Freeman, Green, Lecky, Gardiner, &c., have placed us under a deep debt of gratitude; but valuable as their works are, they are rather books

of knowledge, distinguished by a high degree of literary merit, than striking examples of a scientific treatment of the problems of human life, and therefore are less suitable for our purpose than the few specially mentioned.

I must not attempt to give illustrations of the definite and interesting applications of positive method in literary criticism. It is indeed apparent and significant to all who have followed with attention contemporary thought both in England and in Germany; nor can I touch upon the equally striking evidence in every department of antiquarian research which has made Archæology as positive a science as any branch of Physics. While if we turn to a subject apparently so little suitable for the positive method as Æsthetics, we shall nevertheless detect in its literary treatment a similar development, especially if we trace it from the middle of the last century, when Baumgarten first made Æsthetics a definite system, through the works of Fichte and Hegel and, in this country, Burke,[10] Hogarth,[11] and Alison,[12] down to our own time, and the scientific works of Professor Bain and Mr. Herbert Spencer. In all these departments there is to be seen a gradual increase of method, of accuracy and precision, greater care, more searching investigation, and wider induction.

We have now to inquire, not only as to the extent to which Positivism has invaded literature, but what is likely to be its effect. Is it to be limited to

[10] *Treatise on the Sublime and the Beautiful.*

[11] *Analysis of Beauty.*

[12] *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste.*

special regions of literary activity, or is it a little leaven that will leaven the whole lump? And if so, will this diffusion of the scientific spirit tend to diminish works of imagination and be detrimental to art? In other words, is it to prove a gain or a loss?

This question touches upon an old apprehension as to the influence of scientific training. It is sometimes thought that science tends to harden the susceptibilities of the mind, and to give a distaste for art, but that is not so. Science never narrows our sympathies nor contracts our interests, but gives range and expansion to the human spirit. It is true there is a loss of unintelligent reverence and the poetry of ignorance. But although superstition and uneducated sentiment die out at the approach of science, they are replaced by a more intelligent wonder, a deeper reverence, a nobler poetry, and more exalted art. It is ignorance that separates Truth and Beauty, which are finally united by the highest science. Darwin's *Origin of Species* is not the less scientific because it stimulates the imagination and excites emotions of wonder and delight. Nor is the poetry of *King Lear* injured because that miracle of genius contains the most profound philosophy. But this notion of antagonism between art and science indicates probably a superficial view of one or both of them, and is best answered by the recommendation to obtain a thorough knowledge of the works of Francis Bacon and Goethe, in both of whom poetry and philosophy will be found closely united in a splendid manifestation of genius.

Whatever truth, then, there may be in the alleged

Decline of Art, deplored chiefly by those whose eyes are blinded to present effort, by gazing on the glories of old Greece, it cannot fairly be charged to the influence of Positivism.

When we turn from the special departments of literary activity and survey the entire field, we are at first inclined to agree that "in these days stories are, to all intents and purposes, the whole of literature," so large an area is occupied by works of the imagination, and these it might be thought lie outside the proper limits of positive method.

Dr. Momerie tells an amusing story of a Scotch student who was being examined for orders, and was asked, amongst other things, what he thought of good works. Being anxious to show his orthodoxy, he replied, "Perhaps, all things considered, a man might not be much the worse for a few of them." And occasionally one feels that the artist and writer would not be much the worse for a few elementary ideas of Science. I think it was the late Frank Buckland who wrote an interesting article on this subject, and gave some striking examples of ignorance of natural history collected from the picture galleries. And when in modern fiction we meet with the remarkable phenomenon of a solar eclipse lasting for two hours, and the still more astonishing phenomenon of a full moon on the night following, we again feel that science, without in any degree restricting art, might save it sometimes from being ridiculous.

The essence of art is idealisation, but the idealism of a great artist will be consistent with the laws of the world and the human mind. European art

in all its forms has in this respect exhibited a wide contrast to the extravagant fancy and unrestrained imagination of the Orientalist. But while this distinction has always existed between Asiatic and European art, the latter has further differentiated in recent times by the introduction of scientific conceptions,—that is to say, while the character of mental balance between the reason and the imagination has been hitherto preserved merely by the effect of a widely diffused general education, a distinctly conscious attempt has now been made in literature to base works of imagination on scientific ideas; for example, definitely to apply in the portrayal of character the doctrines of heredity and environment. This is seen in the so-called realistic school, both in the Scandinavian dramatists and in the "Rougon-Macquart" series of M. Zola.

But it is not by seizing upon one or two imperfectly established generalisations, and weaving them into drama or novel, that any solid advantage is to be gained. The influence of Positivism on general literature, as on æsthetics, is all indirect. In the first place, literature gains by the adoption of that fearlessness which belongs to Positivism. "We hear too much," said Buckle, "of the necessity of protecting and rewarding literature, and we hear too little of the necessity of that freedom and boldness in the absence of which the most splendid literature is altogether worthless." A certain number of existing writers, found chiefly but not entirely among our literary sisters, content themselves with this gift of the new philosophy, and finding much enjoyment in breaking through con-

ventionalism by treating a limited group of subjects with unaccustomed freedom, appear to neglect the constructive elements of Positivism.

One of these is seen in the high value attached to a full knowledge of facts before generalisations are made. Matthew Arnold, who of all men of letters was most distinguished by the positive habit and method of thought, was never tired of urging the practical importance of a wide experience in order to attain discriminative tact. And this lesson is of especial importance to those novelists who feel it to be their duty to educate as well as to amuse. In this age of precision the writer of an article or treatise upon a specific subject of law, theology, social or political reform, is, as a rule, accurate and fair, and any inaccuracy and unfairness, under the conditions of free criticism, are quickly observed and corrected; but "the novelist with a purpose," but not always with other qualifications, enters lightly upon the discussion of the most difficult problems, knowing that experts do not trouble to correct errors in an admitted work of fiction. The mischief which zeal combined with ignorance invariably occasions is not lessened by the circumstance that the book is read largely by those who have no special knowledge of the subject treated. The child-like tendency to believe a statement because it is made in an authoritative manner is unfortunately not limited to the age of childhood, and is a fruitful source of delusion.

A second influence, then, is to attach to knowledge an equal importance with boldness and independence. A third feature is the disinterested love

of Truth. To prize knowledge and truth above all else, and to make a personal search for them, are important characters of Positivism, and literature gains by such influences as these.

In M. Zola's *Le Roman expérimental*, which sets forth the principles of the new school, although he objects to be called the founder of a school, we find all these elements of Positivism, and the main characteristics of his work are in undoubted accord with its spirit,—the rejection of conventionalism, the stock-in-trade of inferior writers, the philosophic insight into the Present, the importance of a wide practical experience, the sole reliance upon real life to arouse interest, and absolute fearlessness in saying what he believes he ought to say. And the extraordinary knowledge, memory, and constructive ability of the great realist have enabled him to give large and vivid pictures of life to the world. And every one familiar with his works must see that he has attempted to give these views of life, not as seen in the play of one set of emotions only, but in many departments, and in each, with a copiousness of detail and prodigality of toil possible only to a giant of energy and invention.

But, while we readily admit that a genuine attempt has been made to base imagination upon science and to employ positive method, yet we cannot honestly say that the results so far give that "fulness of pleasure and cordial satisfaction" which works of consummate art never fail to excite. We must, therefore, conclude that positive virtues, like some others, when carried to excess, become vices. And we are forcibly reminded that in the

noblest literature there is much beyond and above the reach and scope of Positivism. The delight of poetry owes nothing to it, and the pure and flawless workmanship of the literary artist is as much beyond the gift of Positivism as genius itself.

To complete our argument, we must inquire if the admittedly great writers owe their success and position in any degree to what we now describe as the positive system and mode of thought. We must again remember that Positivism includes the application of scientific method to all phenomena without exception, and that the highest science is that all-round, far-reaching, and complete knowledge of the human mind revealed in the works of Shakespeare, Bacon, Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle. This knowledge, although the rapidity of genius often inclines us to regard it as intuitive, is really attained by keen observation and profound reflection; so that this intimate acquaintance with all the laws of the human mind, which impresses us as something almost divine in the works of the great masters, is reached by the same principles of induction whereby all other laws have been discovered.

I must bring my remarks to a close. Employing the term Positivism as a convenient name for scientific philosophy, I have endeavoured to give an explanation of its growth, its spirit, and its scope. I have further attempted to show that the positive method, which was first applied with brilliant success to the study of the processes of nature in the material world, is now in full employment in the higher world of idea as embodied in literature.

The imperfections in this demonstration, inseparable from an attempt to cover a wide area in a limited time, as well as those arising from insufficient knowledge, will, I hope, be counterbalanced by the interest and suggestiveness of the subject itself.

THE MISSION OF THE MUSES.

BY ROBERT BURBANK HOLT, F.R.S.L.

[Read February 27th, 1895.]

THE Muses, as commonly delineated, are nine very nice young ladies, in Greek costumes, all posing in appropriate attitudes, and each displaying some emblem which distinguishes her from the rest, and serves to designate her vocation.

Of course, no one supposes that this amiable sisterhood ever were tangible personages who took part in the common concerns of everyday earth-life; but for all that we cannot divest ourselves of the notion that they have been, nay, still are, very real presences among us—beings who have always exercised a powerful influence on the thoughts, feelings, and actions of men.

It will, therefore, not be a waste of time if we endeavour to understand what old symbologists meant by the Muses, and then seek to discover what has been their true mission.

The first noteworthy thing is the number of these damsels. Now in symbology, when any number is used, the synthesis of its ciphers is always reckoned as an additional and superior "one;" consequently the nine Muses and their leader, Apollo, make a decade, and so form the unit for a new and higher scale of numeration. From

this it may fairly be inferred that the number of the Muses typifies the elevation of humanity—the giving to man a higher start-point, from which he can commence a fresh, a fuller, and a nobler evolution.

When we analyse the vocations of the Muses we find that only one, Terpsichore, concerns herself with physical development; and that even she confines her attention to dancing, which has been well defined as the poetry of motion.

Science, too, has but a single exponent, Urania, who devotes herself to astronomy, or the harmony of the heavens.

For the rest, Clio presides over history; Euterpe over music; Thalia over pastoral and comic poetry; Melpomene over tragedy; Erato over lyric, tender, and amorous poetry; Polyhymnia over singing and rhetoric, and Calliope over eloquence and heroic poetry. The literary Muses are consequently seven in number, and I need hardly remind you what a prominent place seven has in the present order of mundane existence.

At first it may seem strange that no Muse is assigned to what we term sacred poetry, but this seeming oversight can be satisfactorily accounted for. The best and wisest of the ancients were essentially pantheistic in the highest sense of the term. They did not regard sun, moon, stone, or tree as different and personal gods, but they recognised the universal indwelling of deity; so probably we shall not be very far wrong if we regard Apollo, the synthesis of the Muses, as an aspect of the divine "One," the All-in-all, who gives us the key-note of a heavenly harmony in which all forms

of earthly music are but minims, crotchets, quavers, and semiquavers, blending to swell the pæan of universal love.

The next thing that we must take into account is the sex of the Muses. In symbolism male is synonymous with positive, female with negative; but then odd numbers are always male, and even numbers female. So in the number and sex of the Muses we get a type of the divine Hermaphrodite, the ever-present duality in Nature, the active and passive powers from which all things proceed.

These matters, properly expounded, satisfactorily explain a considerable number of so-called sacred mysteries, but which in reality are only physical facts discreetly symbolised. Such subjects, however, cannot be gone into at present.

If we study the pedigree of the Muses we find they are the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne; Jupiter being the son of Saturn, whose parents were Cœlus and Terra, which are commonly translated Heaven and Earth, but which in their higher signification mean Spirit and Matter.

The father of the Muses, then, is the third Logos, the mundane creator, a correspondent of the Hindu Brahma and the Hebrew Jehovah.

Mnemosyne was a daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and consequently the sister of Jupiter. Her name signifies memory, and this will presently be shown to have a special appropriateness for the mother of the Muses.

Apollo was a son of Jupiter, his mother being Latona, the daughter of Saturn.

We get here, therefore, a dual Trinity—Cœlus-

Terra-Jupiter, and Jupiter-Latona-Apollo. This system has its correspondent in every great religion of the world.

And now, passing away from mythology, let us try to grasp the ideas which are embodied in these symbolical ladies, and so to realise them in our own consciousnesses.

A little reflection will convince you that the *idea* of a thing must always precede even its subjective manifestation, and also that an idea can originate only in a need.

As you all know, the term Man signifies a Thinker, and evidently there can be no thinker without thought. Now thought is impossible without a subject to think about; consequently it must have, at any rate, a subjective antecedent.

To meet this need a thought-germ or idea comes out of infinitude. When this idea is absorbed by or conceived in our consciousness, it can be evolved by cogitation and become a form according to its kind.

Speaking generally, the process appears to have been this. At a certain stage of his evolution, the "thinker" became conscious that in him there was a "being" to whom his animal form was only a subordinate accessory; a "being" who required appropriate sustenance, but to whom physical food was uncongenial, consequently a special pabulum had to be provided for it.

Suitable conditions having been obtained, its form evolved *pari passu* with the animal frame from a primal germ, which, traced to its ultimate, was the idea of man conceived in creative consciousness. Or perhaps we might say the expe-

rience acquired by universal consciousness differentiates into special forms, each of which matures as a thought-germ, and can be evolved by cogitation on a higher plane of being.

Now the idea of a "thinker" can evolve on countless lines of intelligence, but those which concern us are only the special differentiations of ideation which we cognize as prototypes of the liberal arts. The ancients perceived that each of these arts originated in a need that was vitalised in intelligent consciousness, and which, as an effect, was unthinkable without the antecedence of an efficient cause. They therefore logically inferred that there must be a special creative Intelligence which produced and presided over each intellectual need which germinated in human consciousness. Thus, at a certain stage of the thinker's evolution, the need to record important events and the deeds of illustrious heroes became an effective impulse.

To realise this desire man's faculty of memory was differentiated, and the historic specialisation of it was personified as Clio.

When the need of harmonious combinations of sounds appeared, and it was found that the concord of etheric vibrations awoke fuller and deeper emotions than resulted from prosaic recitations of history, men naturally desired to recall those pleasant experiences; so memory was again differentiated, and the harmonious specialisation of it was personified as Euterpe.

It would be tedious to repeat this analysis, but take any of the sacred nine, and you will have no difficulty in accounting for her existence in the

manner I have indicated. Each is the personification of a mode of memory, specialised to supply a need which had been conceived in the consciousness of man, and consequently she was very properly regarded as a daughter of Mnemosyne.[1]

The evolution of these ideals has drawn humanity onward and upward, ever revealing higher and holier aspirations as the true lover of the beautiful has attained to that which on a lower level seemed to him the ultimate of hope. Very shadowy do the Muses appear to the hard-headed toilers of to-day, but very real have they proved themselves in the world's history, moulding the minds of men by maturing crude ideas, and so providing new germs for the "thinker" to evolve.

Another thing to be noted is the constant association of the Muses with poetry; poetry not limited to verbal eccentricities, but taken in its highest and fullest meaning,—that of thought, clothing a true idea in an ever-beautiful form. Taking it in this sense, we get history as the poetry of action, sculpture as the poetry of form, painting as the poetry of colour, music as the poetry of sound, dancing as the poetry of motion, astronomy as the poetry of the universe. This constant manifestation of truth by beauty I hold to be the mission of the Muses, and their agent is the "thinker," both in his individual and collective capacities.

But while we say this it should never be for-

[1] In symbology every god or goddess was a personified force, and the differentiations of that force were regarded as his or her children. The mother of the Muses being a personification of the force we term memory, what can her daughters be but differentiations of that force, *i. e.* modes of memory?

gotten that both physically and mentally we are only links in the chain of Divine evolution (a chain which, descending from Omnipotence, reaches to the lowest and feeblest personality), and that each true man must bear his part in enabling the feeblest of his fellows to climb towards the infinite above him.

It would be very interesting to study every phase of poetry, but that is impossible in the time which is available, so I will follow the example of the ancients, who, being writers, associated the Muses specially with literature; and in doing so I shall take my illustrations mostly from metrical compositions in our mother tongue.

According to the records, five of these fair ones devoted themselves to clothing ideas in suitable words; Clio presides over history, Thalia over pastoral and comic versification. This appears to be the natural order of literary evolution, and is in exact correspondence with the needs of a primitive people.

By the ordinance of Nature all men at all times depend for their existence on the products of the soil, and in the early days of a society, when neither manufactures nor commerce have been organised, every one must devote himself to agriculture or to hunting. Now though farming is unquestionably the most natural, healthy, and useful occupation, it is essentially a monotonous one, and an agriculturist having but few mental resources, he can only wonder at things which are incomprehensible to him.

He will listen patiently to stories of every-day

life, and he can understand domestic incidents; but if you want really to interest him, the comic element must be freely introduced. You can excite him to a devotional frenzy or rouse him to a patriotic fury, but these moods will have only a brief duration, and he will gradually subside into his normal apathy unless, as in the case of the old miracle plays and modern salvationism, you present everything, even sacred symbols, to him in a motley garb, and satisfy his craving for buffoonery.

Lament it as you will, the man whose daily life is a dull drudgery must laugh in his leisure hours, or lose the little spark of intelligence that Nature has allotted to him. The ancients recognised this, and very wisely gave Thalia a prominent place in their intellectual hierarchy.

But every phase of life has its dark as well as its bright side, and horrors have a strange fascination for all of us; consequently the intellectual evolution of man would not be symmetrical if no provision were made for the expression of his tragic sympathies. . . . Of course, among a rude people nothing but horrors realistically depicted would awaken their understanding. It is only when the evolution of godliness has substituted love for brutal lust, heroism for savage bloodthirstiness, and the recognition of right for the tyranny of power, that the higher strains of poetry can be evoked, and a mental conflict culminating in an appropriate catastrophe, such as we find in Othello or Hamlet, can dominate the manliness of men.

To this stage, when woman is not regarded merely as a desirable possession, but as the in-

spirer and rewarder of our noblest passions, tender and amorous poetry may be appropriately assigned; and if Erato does sometimes become a little too exacting, her influence is so refining, and there is such a fascination in her caprices, that the sternest of us are ever ready to forgive her.

I have defined poetry as "thought clothing a true idea in an ever-beautiful form:" in its literary aspect, then, it should not be a tawdry conglomeration of superlatives or a mere combination of luscious tones, a verbal syllabub, "at best most musically dull." Still less should it emphasise the nudity of nature, appeal only to man's animal instinct, or pander to his brutal passions. A poet must have a keen intuition of truth, be ever ready to absorb a sublime idea, to evolve it in his consciousness, and finally to present it to the intelligent universe clothed in thoughts that are instinct with his own personality, and expressed in words that are appropriate, concise, perspicuous, and musical.

His Eidolon must not be stultified by conventional forms, for the object of conventionalism is to freeze man's intellect, to petrify his thoughts, to extinguish their vitality, and so to prevent their becoming the germ-bearers of a still nobler ideation.

With such a system neither the Muses nor their votaries can have anything in common; and it is for this reason that when society becomes too articulated poetry loses its grandeur and virility, and a poet ceases to be the prophet of his race.

On the other hand, in the early stages of an intellectual era, when poets are not yet masters of

their craft, and fear to trust their "prentice hands" to embody their consciousness of the beautiful, they are invariably plagiarists, and paraphrase is commonly resorted to. Thus, in countries where a dominant church interdicted originality and plucked the pinions of genius, the office of a bard degenerated into chopping up the text of Scripture, and then patching the fragments of it into stated lengths with superfluous adjectives, according to curious and complicated rules.

The following is an example taken from the writings of Cædmon, as given by Sharon Turner:

"To us it is much right
That we the Ruler of the firmament,
The Glory-King of Hosts
With words should praise,
With minds should love:
He is in power abundant,
High Head of all creations,
Almighty Lord!
There was not to Him ever beginning
Nor origin made,
Nor end cometh,
Eternal Lord."

Now, making every allowance for losses through translation, what is such composition but devising complicate verbiage to distort ideas that have already been perfectly expressed? In all these lines is there a single new idea, or a phrase that is not trite and diluted?

Or take his Satan's soliloquy:

"Why should I contend?
I cannot have

Any creature my superior!
I may with my hands
So many wonders work!
And I must have great power
To acquire a more God-like stool,
Higher in the heavens!
Yet why should I
Sue for His grace
Or bend to Him
With any obedience?
I may be
A god as he is:
Stand by me,
Strong companions,
Who will not deceive me
In this contention."

Such a Satan has nothing grand about him. What is he but a vulgar ruffian, with no thought beyond self-aggrandisement?

True, the work is praiseworthy as the production of an illiterate cowherd; but when we remember how admirably the same subject has been treated by Milton we cannot but feel that a student must be either very eccentric in his taste or be sadly in want of an occupation if he turns from the mature scholarship of 'Paradise Lost' to spell out the crudities of Cædmon.

There is, however, one reputed Anglo-Saxon, but more probably Scandinavian composition which has distinct literary merit. 'Beowulf' is a true and notable poem; its incidents are characteristic and dramatic; its diction forcible if rude and verbose. In it there is a distinct evolution of ideas, and they pass before us as thought-forms, grand in their

barbaric self-assertion. There is no toning of their lineaments to conventional inanity, but each character represents an ideal man as conceived by a master-mind of the day. For instance, we read—

"There was a more grim spirit called Greudel,
Great was the mark of his steps;
He that ruleth the moors,
The fen, and the fastness
Of the Eifel race.
* * * * *
Coming to the hall of Hothgar by night,
He found there within
The assembly of the Ethelings
Sleeping after the feast,
Knowing no sorrow.
This wan-sceaft of men,
This creature unhealthful,
Grim and greedy,
Soon was ready,
Reeking and fierce;
And he took away in their rest
Thirty theyns.
Then he departed,
Satisfied with plunder,
To return home
From that slaughter."

This is a graphic description of the men, manners, and beliefs of the times, and the whole poem is "an intellectual treasure, written in the vernacular dialect, which awakens the popular mind, and induces men to read and think for themselves," and consequently it is a work that assists in carrying out the mission of the Muses.

But it is when we turn to the great Elizabethan writers that we find this mission most fully under-

stood and furthered with the most intelligent audacity. These men never swerved from their allegiance to the Muses, and instead of the parrot-like repetition of orthodox platitudes which characterises the Anglo-Saxon word-stringers, they went straight to the sacred fount, drank deeply of its living waters, absorbed the grand ideas which eternally vibrate in its ether, and then re-evolved them in new and more beautiful forms, that men might know what a glorious thing life would be if all of us could realise a poet's consciousness of it.

If anyone disputes my contention, let him point out a line in Spenser or Shakespeare which does not embody a sublime idea in a more beautiful form than any he can adduce from all the Anglo-Saxon paraphrase which has escaped a merited oblivion. No doubt these works are very valuable to philologists, but they never should be paraded as classic compositions; they are distinct retrogressions from preceding excellence, and in many cases display the superstitious dread of uttering a Divine name which is still characteristic of savages.

In considering the manifestation of truth by beauty we must not overlook the medium in which ideas are embodied by the literary thinker. Dean Trench very prettily calls words "fossil poetry," but on the whole it would seem more correct to regard them as the residuum of poetic phrases in which true ideas once lived, moved, and had their being, but which, through the exigencies of speech and the attrition of abbreviation, have been divested of all superfluous matter, and now, as thought-crystals, serve to enrich the crowns of our modern

mind-makers, and to awe the thoughtless by flashing on them new rays of eternal verity from every fresh facet that the Muses can cut upon them.

There is no use in seeking the origin of speech, nor need we stop to appraise the respective values of the Pooh-pooh and Bow-wow theories; it is enough to know that in all ages, and wherever the "thinker" has been found, he has always had a vocabulary at command, and has possessed the art of so combining words as to make them the vehicle of his thoughts. We observe, too, that directly those thoughts transcend the bare necessities of existence his phrases at first "mean not, but only bungle round a meaning;" and that, as he tries again and again to give precision to the idea which his consciousness has intuited, redundant words and letters are gradually elided, and his memory summarises whole series of speculations, till at last sentences are reduced to words, and then, as Max Müller tells us, independent words are reduced to mere dust by the constant wear and tear of speech, and finally survive only as terminations ('Science of Language,' vi, p. 48).

This seems to be the method by which the Muses evolve truth through condensing the expression of it till ultimately the verbal germ of verity, purged from all dross and freed from all entanglement, is translated to a higher sphere, where a sublimer thinker receives it as an intuition, and continues its evolution in a yet Diviner form.

If this hypothesis be correct, we should naturally expect to find literary poetry becoming more definite in expression and fuller of crystallised ideas as

the mental powers of the thinker become more and more developed, and his vehicle of expression approaches nearer to perfection. Social conditions, too, must be taken into account; and when we remember that it was not till 1406 that farmers and mechanics who did not devote their children to the Church were allowed to send them to school, there is little wonder that in England a higher consciousness of the beauty of intelligent being, attainable by proper evolution of the thought-power latent in men, was previously a privilege monopolised by the few. When, in addition to mere limitation, the ideas which are germs of truth matured by the experience of humanity can be received only into consciousnesses sterilised by a dogmatism which insists on the infallibility of hereditary hypotheses, the future is strangled by the past, and the function of the thinker is no more.

Happily the destiny of man is identified with Divine progression, and the fanatic reiterators of obsolete formularies find it impossible to arrest the flow of truth by brandishing the badges of their credulity or by muttering the curses of their malevolence. And so in due time the sacred undercurrent asserted its supremacy, and, bursting the barriers which impeded it, swept onward triumphantly, sparkling in the sunlight, and mocking the dismay of manikins who would fetter it with fantastic fables.

We all feel a sentimental regret for old faiths and perished institutions, but it is impossible to resuscitate the past. So many new ideas have fructified in our understandings, that what was

earnestness with our forefathers is but frivolity with us, however much simulated enthusiasm we may see fit to expend upon it. Rushlights and torches were excellent in their day; but while electric lighting is available, what sane man would advocate our reverting to them?

Except, then, as students of philology, why should we unearth Cædmon's paraphrases when John Milton, dealing with the same subject, has presented to us his matured conceptions clothed in words that make our spirits vibrate in sympathy with manhood, and fill us with reverence for Deity?

Who can look upon a fair landscape without a gush of memory compelling him to feel—

> "These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
> Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
> Thus wondrous fair! Thyself how wondrous then—
> Unspeakable!"

And does he not make us experience a weird sympathy with the embodiment of proud, intelligent self-reliance, who in the first bitterness of his despair exclaims—

> "Evil! be thou my good! by thee, at least
> Divided empire with heaven's King I hold,
> As this new world and man ere long shall know"?

This, to us, is the perfected beauty of language; in fact, as Weisse very justly observes, "English is now adequate to express any conceptions of which the human mind is capable." But here, as elsewhere, there is no finality; the "thinker" has not attained, and never will attain, the limit of his possibilities; consequently we have no right to

assume that the English of to-day will suffice for Englishmen a thousand years hence,—nay, if we may reason from the experience of the past, "as sciences advance, new terms and new meanings of existing words will be added to our vocabulary:" for one part of the mission of the Muses is "to evolve language, to strengthen and to simplify it;" and though, as Grim says, "modern English has gained in spirituality what it may have lost in Anglo-Saxon inflections," still in some respects it is capable of vast improvement. For instance, we might well elide all mute letters, have consistent pronunciations, restrict each word to one meaning, and supply the noun, verb, or adjective which in many cases is necessary to complete a grammatical series. The fifty extracts quoted by Weisse contain 9554 words. Of these, 7272, or 76 per cent., are repetitions, while 4693 are "particles;" and he fairly argues that "when we realise such facts we must confess that even English, the choicest and most elastic of modern idioms, is not as telegraphic and concise as it might be, and is yet capable of improvement as to repetitions and particles, to say nothing of harmony between the written and the spoken word."

We may be well assured that the Muses, who have done so much for us in the past, will not fail us in the future. How grandly they have hitherto carried out their mission is well exemplified by the gems of poetry with which their modern votaries have enriched our literature. Take, for example, Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard:'

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness—and to me."

Here every line is a perfect picture; every word is the epitome of a human experience, the key-note with which memory awakens limitless associations; every idea is illustrated by appropriate imagery, and clothed in a verbal form of such surpassing beauty that in reading it the harshest voice instinctively becomes harmonious.

Then we have Burns singing of the mountain daisy:

"Wee modest crimson-tippèd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour!
For I maun crush among the stoure
Thy slender stem!
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem."

Are these not musical words, beautiful in their tender simplicity? and how they bring us into sympathy with Coleridge when he sings—

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who pitied us,
He made, He loveth all"!

If you want descriptive poetry, what can be finer than Keats's 'Eve of Saint Agnes,' which begins—

"Saint Agnes' Eve, ay, bitter chill it was;
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;
The hare leaped trembling o'er the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold"?

Why, every word conjures up not a mere spectre,

but a palpable being, instinct with vitality. How truly "such thing of beauty is a joy for ever"!

> "Its loveliness increases, it can never
> Pass into nothingness."

For imaginative poetry what can surpass some of Shelley's visions in 'The Cloud'? for instance—

> "The orbèd maiden
> With white fire laden,
> Whom mortals call the moon,
> Glides glimmering o'er
> My fleece-like floor,
> By the midnight breezes strewn;
> And wherever the beat
> Of her unseen feet,
> Which only the angels hear,
> May have broken the woof
> Of my tent's thin roof,
> The stars peep behind her and peer;
> And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
> Like a swarm of golden bees,
> When I widen the rent
> In my wind-built tent,
> Till calm rivers and lakes and seas,
> Like strips of the sky
> Fallen through from on high,
> Are paved with the moon and with these."

Why, he almost transforms us into angels endowed with the faculty of hearing the pit-pat of the moon as she treads the "fleece-like floor" that a passing cloud has created for her.

As a contrast, if you want anything horrible, take an extract from Byron's 'Siege of Corinth,' where Alp, "who is known by his white arm bare," is roaming over the battle-field by moonlight:

"And he saw the lean dogs before the wall
O'er the dead holding their carnival;
Growling and gorging o'er carcass and limb,
They were too busy to bark at him.
From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh
As ye peel a fig when the fruit is fresh;
And their white teeth crunched o'er the whiter skull
As it slipped from their jaws when their edge grew dull;
And they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead
When they scarcely could rise from the spot where they fed."

If you want patriotic poetry, what can be better than Macaulay's picture of a free people?

"Then none were for a party, but all were for the State;
Then the rich man helped the poor man, and the poor man loved the great;
Then lands were fairly portioned, then spoils were fairly sold;
The Romans were like brothers in the brave days of old."

As an example of manly self-assertion we have the Rev. R. S. Hawker's celebrated ballad:

"Out spake the captain brave and bold,
A gallant wight was he;
Though London's tower were Michael's hold,
We'll set Trelawney free,
We'll cross the Tamar hand in hand,
The Exe shall be no stay—
Go side by side from strand to strand,
And who shall bid us nay?
And shall they scorn Tre, Pol, and Pen,
And shall Trelawney die?
There's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why."

My object in giving these quotations is to show

that though our age has not produced a Shakespeare, a Milton, or a Spenser, still the average standard of literary poetry has been considerably raised, and I fancy that all who "cannot make love for antiquity's sake" will be inclined to agree with me. Of course I have omitted the mere twitterers in verse, and have selected songsters of repute as fittest to compare with the bards who were esteemed in the sixteenth century, and whose works are not yet quite forgotten.

If you desire a test, translate a Saxon, an Elizabethan, and a modern poem into prose, and you will generally find that the ideas in the first two can thus be expressed much more concisely; while poems by Gray, Keats, or Shelley require a larger number of words to give a prose rendering of them. Surely this shows that modern poetry is richer in thought and fuller of fancy than any that has preceded it; but for all that we have no poet of the highest class. Tennyson, the man of modern thought; Browning, the rugged and obscure; and Swinburne, the melodious carnalist, count their idolaters by the thousand; but whether any of their embodied ideas have sufficient vitality to survive much beyond the present generation is yet unproven.

To me Bailey's 'Festus,' with all its faults, seems a far grander poem than any of these writers have produced.

> "Death does his work
> In secret and in joy intense, untold;
> As though an earthquake smacked its mumbling lips
> O'er some thick-peopled city,"

is as fine a simile as any in our language.

In another place Festus says—

"Oh! I was glad when something in me said,
Come, let us worship beauty! And I bowed
And went about to seek a shrine; but found
None that my soul, when seeing, said enough to;
Many I met with where I put up prayers,
And had them more than answered.

* * * * * *

At last came love: not whence I sought nor thought it;
As on a ruined and bewildered wight
Rises the roof he meant to have lost for ever,
On came the living vessel of all love;
Terrible in its beauty as a serpent;
Rode down upon me like a ship full sail,
And bearing me before it kept me up,
Spite of the drowning speed at which we drave
On, on, until we sank both. Was not this love?"

Lucifer:

Why, how can I tell? I am not in love;
But I have ofttimes heard mine angels call
Most piteously on their lost loves in heaven;
And, as I suffer, I have seen them come,
Seen star-like faces peep between the clouds,
And hell became a tolerable torment.
Some souls lose all things but the love of beauty,
And by that love they are redeemable;
For in love and beauty they acknowledge good,
And good is God—the great Necessity."

This may not be the highest class of poetry, but surely it is very little below that standard.

Bailey's conception, too, of a high Intelligence, devoted to evil, yet perfectly truthful and ultimately redeemable by its power to love, is as original as it is sublime. Indeed, it appears to be a decided

advance even on Milton's personification of Satan. Other characters in this work are equally noteworthy.

Why we have now no poet of the first order can only be conjectured. Possibly it may be that our age has matured the mentality of its manhood; that most men have become specialists, and are so absorbed in particulars that universals hardly interest them. Attention to details is regarded as of more importance than grandeur of outline, and so poets have become miniature painters instead of ideal world-weavers; while niceties of grammar are more esteemed than vividness of diction, and servility to fashion counts more than sympathy with nature.

This is the dark foreground of the picture, patent to every one; but beyond it we can see that the Muses have reached the end of another decade, and are about to recommence their evolution of ideas on a yet higher and wider scale. The old conceptions of the origin, object, and destiny of Kosmos have been exploded by scientific observation and scholastic criticism. A causeless Cause of all things is still felt to be a logical necessity, but how to embody the Intelligence which ensouls this necessity without outraging the truth-love of man's inner consciousness is a problem that has yet to be solved by humanity.

When, ages hence, the key-note, which is now but faintly sounded by the Muses, shall be evolved into a pæan, grander and fuller than any that have preceded it, can we doubt that singers will appear who will be worthy to be entrusted with its

sublimest melodies, or that their vocalisation of them will be a perfection of poetry that the "thinker" of to-day is utterly unable to imagine?

For that "good time coming" we can only work and wait, remembering that—

"Our hope is eternal progression,
With charity fruitful in all;
For time never knew retrogression,
And none e'en a thought can recall.

"But o'er us, around us, and in us
Abideth the giver of might,
Who tenderly teaching would win us
To trust that the true is the right.

"So sink we to slumber unfearing,
Assured that our Father is nigh;
And wake up to-morrow revering,
Or sleep on unquestioning why."

KING ARTHUR AND SAINT GEORGE: THE SCOTTISH ARCHIVES, THE WELSH ARCHIVES, THE ARMORICAN ARCHIVES, THE SAXON ARCHIVES, THE HINDU ARCHIVES.

BY DR. PHENÉ, LL.D., F.S.A., V.P.R.S.L.

[Read March 27th, 1895.]

I PROPOSE to adopt a different course from that usually pursued in the treatment of this subject.

Authors, so far, have taken one or other of the groups of legends localised in Armorica, the west of England and Wales, and Scotland, and in confining themselves to any such locality have, of course, taken the bias attached to it.

The course now pursued is that of comparison of the legends of these various localities with each other, a means by which parallelism confirms or refutes certain features.

Going further, I have confronted the grand political opponent of King Arthur, viz. St. George, with the British king, and here antagonistic parallelism becomes evident.

This being so, and St. George being of distinct Oriental origin, it appeared not improbable that, with the known early intercourse of the west of Britain with Asia and the great influx of Indo-European words and metaphors, traditions subsequently applied to King Arthur were also of

Eastern origin. Pursuing this by investigating the Hindu traditions and historic epics, distinct parallelism appeared in them on comparison with each class of local traditions of the West. It is in this sense that the subject will now be laid before you.

When the chivalrous King of England, Edward III, instituted the princely Order of the Garter, he did but give expression to an intense current of feeling that pervaded the more generous and enlightened classes all over Europe. Almost all orders, it must be borne in mind, are the result of a feeling or desire, rather than a bait to excite any such effect. Once established with the full approbation of those who are interested in them, emulation naturally follows, both amongst the immediately constituted members and a host of candidates hoping to reap the honours.

The Order of the Garter was the badge of an outburst of feeling, having its source in a desire for freedom of mind and body, and which found expression in the term chivalry. The powers to be overcome were terrible, and the propagandists of the new doctrine carried their customs to an extreme, and buoyed up their hopes with an ideality only capable of being understood by their incessant risks and the wild excitation necessary for carrying them through almost insurmountable difficulties.

The romance of poetry was brought to bear, alike to stimulate and to reward, and the impossible was not only professed to be easy, but described as being always accomplished by every true knight. Hence ensued the most violent exaggerations and the most preposterous recitals of events. Hungering

and thirsting after laudation as their only wage, the flower of chivalry seldom reached mature manhood, and hardly ever old age. Prominent amongst its more valuable features was the furtherance of religion, as a reason for the morality it ostensibly advocated; and with these facts before us we may perhaps look with less severity at the readiness with which the guardians of the faith introduced, or in the first instance perhaps permitted, the introduction of miracles and wonders, in a theatre in which they themselves were constantly playing a most prominent part, such stimulant often proving the afflatus which carried success where the prospect seemed hopeless.

Time will not permit, nor is it necessary to the argument, that we examine questions concerning the event which caused the *title* of the order, and whether it were the Countess of Salisbury, or whether, as some have suggested, that a party of Richard I's knights were distinguished in the fight against Cyprus by a thong tied round one of their knees by that king; one or other would be the mere external accident which gave vent to the latent feeling. As I shall not refer to Richard I again, I may as well say here that it is recorded that the banner of England which he took to the East was a dragon, but the banner he used on his return was St. George killing the dragon. It is clear the dragon banner was offensive to the Greek Christians.

It is not improbable, however, from the tradition of the Cyprian event, that a badge round the knee was used to indicate special confraternity in any enterprise requiring peculiar daring or courage, and as a

sign of homage to the tutelary power invoked, as distinguished from the badge on the arm of a knight, which was indicative of individual service to his lady. If this be so, there is a complete significance in the expression *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, which it seems to me otherwise to lack, and the handing the garter to the Countess of Salisbury by the king was adroitly turned into a complimentary admission into the legion of honour and knighthood, and the expression used to deprecate any objection on the ground of her not being a knight nor of the warlike sex—a position brought graphically before us in Spenser's heroines, and historically in the Amazons.

This is the more probable because the age in which the order was founded was one of female heroism. On the Continent the wife of Charles of Blois was an experienced military commander. Charles of Blois was personally opposed by the Countess of Mountfort, who took him prisoner at the Castle of Rochelle de Rien in Brittany, to which he had laid siege. At the same time, Philippa, wife of Edward III, who was engaged at Calais, raised on her own responsibility an army of 12,000 men, hurried to the north, and engaged David Bruce with his army of 50,000, gaining a complete victory, and securing as prisoners in the Tower of London David Bruce, the Earls of Fife, Sutherland, Monteith, Carric, Douglas, and others, and then personally announced the news to the king at Calais, claiming as her reward an act of mercy, the lives of Eustace St. Pierre and the five other warriors whom Edward had condemned to death. Not that valour

was wanting in the men. The King of France was only not slain at Crescy by being forcibly dragged against his will from the field, wounded as he was. The old and blind King of Bohemia took part in the fight, the reins of his horse being held by a knight on either side of him. He was slain, and his badge and motto were adopted by the Prince of Wales. It was, in short, an age of military emulation in which the sexes vied with each other, and in which the Black Prince and Queen Philippa carried off the prizes of victory.

Whatever the direct incident might have been, it is certain that the order was no sooner instituted than it was enthusiastically greeted by the knights of every country. Philip de Valois, King of France, responded, and the renown occasioned by the high and noble bearing of the Knights of the Order of St. George spread far and wide, and the Emperors of Russia, the Dukes of Mantua in Italy, and the Counts Mansfield in Germany sooner or later adopted. that saint as the patron of their country or family interests.

In this country St. George is associated with St. Michael, a curious combination, which, although its meaning and origin are, I believe, both in obscure darkness in the minds of the authorities of the Heralds' College, is distinctly recognisable in the customs of past ages, to which I propose now to draw your attention.

St. George being the more modern of the two as the saint, with whom he is associated in the last order, is clearly a resuscitation; and as I propose to trace the subject back into the past, and thus try to

unravel some of the tangled threads which connect it with the present, we will, if you please, take a slight glance at the history of St. George first. I shall not waste a word on Gibbon's St. George, the occupant of the Episcopal throne of Alexandria. Whether, indeed, he was the same person with the St. George we know so much more familiarly, or totally distinct from him, as he chronologically appears to have been, does not even affect the question so far as I propose to examine it; for what I have to do with is an account which, in its actual record, must necessarily be a fable, but a fable which, like most others, covers real events, and was the expression of powerful feeling.

St. George of Cappadocia is known from the great event which historical mythology records of his overcoming the Dragon. The story is a pretty one, and may bear, perhaps, slightly sketching, even in a paper of necessary brevity. It is at first puzzling to find him the patron saint of a country under the Latin Church, as he appears to have been the great patron of the Greek Church, in which he is called the Great Martyr, but this difficulty vanishes as we investigate. He is reputed to have been born in Cappadocia of noble Christian parents, to have flourished in the reign of Diocletian, and to have held the post of tribune in the army. On his way to join his legion he reached a city in Libya according to some, in Syria according to others. A monstrous dragon, a tenant of a neighbouring marsh or lake—it is curious that we hardly ever, if ever, find an account of a dragon without water—ravaged the district, and to propitiate him the people,

who had taken refuge within the walls of the city, gave him daily two sheep, and subsequently two children, chosen by lot.

The lot one day fell on Cleodolinda, the only daughter of the king. The latter tried every argument to save his child, who was extremely beautiful and worthy, without avail, and after eight days she was arrayed in her royal robes, led out of the city, and the gates closed behind her. She walked steadily, but in tears, over the bones of former victims in the direction of the dragon's haunt, when a knight in armour mounted on a noble steed appeared, questioned her as to her tears, and determined to bring the matter to an issue in her favour. This he, *of course*, succeeded in, and severely wounding the dragon with his spear, then binding him with the girdle of the princess (and here it becomes evident that ladies wore very strong girdles, or dragons were easily led in those days), induced the tethered monster to follow himself and the princess to the gates of the city. The inhabitants were, it is said, greatly terrified even at the subdued and bound dragon, though he followed the knight and lady like a dog. St. George then promised that if all the people in the city would be baptised he would kill the monster before their eyes. This was agreed to, and the dragon's head was cut off, and St. George received great κῦδος; hence the emblem seen alike on Russian cannon, on the breasts of English nobles, and on our gold coins. While the tradition is clearly a history of the triumph of Christianity over paganism, whether in the heroism with which he bore the torments that followed very

soon after this event in consequence of his trampling upon the edict of Diocletian against the Christians, or, as is not improbable, his actually testing the power of some serpent or reptile deity, as in the record of Bel and the Dragon, and proving to the unhappy pagans that they were sacrificing their sons and daughters to devils, brought them all over to the religion of the Cross. This appears to me the most probable, as he is reported to have prayed in resistance to being forced to join in pagan sacrifice, on which thunder and lightning came from heaven and destroyed the temple and the priests and the idols.

In my paper read before the congress of the British Archæological Association at York in August, 1889, I showed reasons for assuming that St. George, who, as to his dragon, was probably mythical, was really a representative of Constantine the Great, the date, conditions, history, and all details being parallel.

It is curious that we find St. George in Latin Italy without the dragon, as when he is represented as patron saint of Venice; and with the exception of a representation of him by Correggio he is mostly represented in Italian pictures without the dragon. In the principal of these pictures he stands by a throne on which is the Virgin Mary; there is no dragon, and this is soon accounted for, as subsequent representations place the dragon beneath the feet of the Virgin herself. From this we may at least infer that the emblem was considered one of very great importance, and its severance from St. George conveys to us a most interesting phase in history,

and one of the grand features of the difference between the Greek and Latin Churches. The Latin Church, in fact, ignored St. George, and erased him from the calendar.

It is probable that the greatness of this personage arose from his being, as there seems some reason to suppose, the first militant Christian,—not the first Christian soldier, but the first soldier Christian; and standing alone for a time in that character he would, of course, be represented as encountering single-handed the dragon of superstition, the visible idol deity of the pagans, with which Satan had fascinated the eyes of men—the exact position of Constantine.

If we may assume this, he would be found to be the originator of the militant feature in the Church, and as such would necessarily be honoured by the East and West. It is certain that he was reverenced in the East at a very remote date, one of the first churches Constantine erected after his own conversion being in honour of this saint. This new feature would in a most sudden and almost miraculous manner cause an enormous numerical and an immensely wealthy accession to the Christian body; nor could there be any valid reason for rejecting it, as the new-comers embraced their profession with enthusiasm, and in some cases even eclipsed the ecclesiastics in austerity and morals. But this new element, which, under Providence, accomplished the supremacy of Christianity in Europe, having fulfilled its object, began to separate itself from a religious position, and while paying to the latter every respect, merged back into its own normal features, and here a fresh historical position arose.

Christianity, which had released the mind from the terrors of paganism, and given to it an almost pristine freedom, began now to assume power over the body and temporal affairs. This was necessarily repugnant to the military element or knighthood; and when the latter released itself it asserted the liberty of the body,—in other words, it sided with and re-created a power, that of the civil magistrate, which had been obliterated with the cessation of Roman military authority—a position it has ever since preserved as being the noble bond of union between the people and the Crown: for a long time, indeed, the two went hand in hand together, and the partition was gradually effected. The Church struggled to preserve the *statum rerum*, and instituted military orders—the Templars, Knights of Malta, and others, which became very formidable bodies, and which it was hoped would stand pre-eminent in a military sense. But these very bodies—her military strongholds, if I may so express it—were more injurious to her than less shackled military powers, and became schismatic and even sceptical, in consequence of which and their undefined authority they had to be dissolved.

The Order of the Knights Templars was dissolved, their property confiscated, and the knights tortured to death in the most shocking way on the grand charge of "ophiolatria," or serpent-worship, a figure of a dragon being asserted to be their idol. Even assuming that the charge was a false one, yet it is clear that such a charge showed the knowledge of serpent-worship as a possible thing; so that so late as the period of the Templars serpent-worship

must have been known and understood, and formed a schism, as it did with the Ophites amongst the early Christians. The Templars met with most leniency in Britain, and it is by no means improbable that this arose from the dragon being a British badge,—even the worship may have been remotely retained, as the passing through the fire still is in the secluded valleys of the Highlands; or sympathy may have arisen from the feeling that retention of the dragon badge was not sufficient to imply the worship of it. On the other hand, the Templars were made up from the most ancient families in Europe, and some of these might only nominally have become Christians, and perhaps so even for the purpose of joining this renowned body, and might have carried their old and unreformed religion with them. The distance of time is slight between the Templars and ourselves, and the inference is that serpent-worship came down to very recent times in Europe, though not as an openly acknowledged religion.

As the dissolution of unity between the sacerdotal and knightly powers approached, there arose a good deal of confusion; ecclesiastics were often better soldiers than priests, while soldiers were often better Christians than the ecclesiastics.

Still for a long time there were mutual obligation and dependence; for when the lawless and profane plundered the people, and captured and imprisoned virtuous women, the knights of chivalry released them—an act which would have been worse than useless if such persons were, in those rough times, to be thrown again upon the clemency of other law-

less marauders, instead of being received in a hospitable refuge as they were in the nearest Christian domicile.

It was one thing to release half a dozen imprisoned damsels, another to provide them with safe and honorable resting-places.

Behind all this scenic effect and pageantry, however, was a question that agitated each party to the quick, viz. which should sway the sceptre through *regal* influence; and here the alternations became violent, and often murderous, as in the case of Thomas à Becket.

We may, I think, venture to assume from the preceding remarks that a great deal of our present freedom, and hence our civilisation, proceeded first from the union with, and subsequently the severance of, the military from the ecclesiastical element—in short, from chivalry; and this should be clearly kept in view, as it throws a great deal of light upon preceding events—events, indeed, which *produced* these results, and which, it seems to me, can be better understood by thus approaching them through their results than otherwise. Indeed, the course I am pursuing is one of steady retrospection, as a means of arriving at a clearer understanding of some of those matters now clouded in the mists of time; and I propose to examine the subject in that way for the purpose of trying to open some of those old thoroughfares of thought, long obstructed by the débris of historical events. Instead of beginning at a point which is, as a rule, always hurried over by historians, as one little understood, and from which they proceed to known facts, I propose to

proceed from known facts to those less understood, in order to see if they can be made clearer by that means. In taking this course I do not propose to search about for minor events in remote places, or to trust to any accidental circumstances to construct a theory, but to take only the grandest and most noble positions, and to trace the very cream of chivalry back into the past, along the highway of knighthood.

It will be admitted that the chivalric was purely a combative element, and also that it was in some way exclusively Arthurian. There appears evidence, indeed, that in the very age historically ascribed to Arthur, St. George was a known and revered personage, *i. e.* by the Anglo-Saxons, who it is by no means improbable had, while still pagans, their information of this celebrated person through Central Europe; whereas the Christianity of the Britons appears to have been much anterior, and to have pervaded the north and west of Britain in particular. But through this channel he was also known, and one of the banners said to have been carried before King Arthur himself was an embroidered figure of St. George.

If so, we can easily understand that with the supremacy of the Christianised Saxons the credit and fame of George as a Christian knight and hero simply would be used to obliterate that of Arthur, or at least to cause it to be quite localised. It does not appear that he was prominently brought forward; but, on the other hand, they rather quietly than noisily set Arthur's renown aside, and would be content at merely naming one of whom they

probably knew but little as a more ancient and renowned champion.

We find something of this even in Spenser's 'Red Cross Knight,' who "on his breast a bloodie cross he bore," who is *first* brought on the scene.

This sop given to the Saxon Cerberus, Spenser, who courted the favour of our great female Tudor, the glorious Queen Elizabeth, puts St. George altogether at the mercy of Arthur. The red cross knight is absolutely in the den of the dragon, conquered and in slavery, when Arthur, whose shield emulates the sun, slays the dragon and releases him, otherwise the story is the same (p. 39, v. 44; p. 38, v. 31; p. 42, v. 20).* Spenser was clearly drawing his ideas from an Egyptian source of the good and bad serpent deities, or from the contest of the Pictish and Gaelic dragons.

Donatello's statue of St. George at Florence represents him with the shield, on which the cross is engraven and placed in front of him.† And, in short, we can readily understand that the preservation of the reputation of Arthur would not have been considered a sacred duty by the Saxons; for, irrespective of the humiliation they are said to have received from the historical Arthur, it has been the custom of all conquering and dominant nations to suppress the honorable reputation of the deities, demi-gods, or heroes of those whom they subdued, a custom thoroughly in vogue in those early times. To give an example of this custom in Britain, I may quote

* Page 39, v. 44, Una relates her grief; page 38, v. 31, Arthur as Pendragon; page 42, v. 20, Arthur with his solar shield.

† Just agreeing with Spenser's idea.

the studied omission, as taken notice of by Mr. Thomas Innes,* by Scottish writers of the laudable hospitality extended by Kinoth, King of the Picts, to Alcred, King of Northumberland, in the year 774; and even the obliteration of his very name from the royal lists—not, as I have shown elsewhere, a solitary case. I think, therefore, we may trace in this country a species of rivalry between Arthur and St. George, which resulted in the supremacy of the latter as the patron saint.

But George, a mere man, evidently wanted support to outweigh his mysterious opponent, so a spiritual saint was brought in to overbear the necromantic reputation of Merlin and Arthur combined; and only those who have turned attention to the extreme tenacity with which the popular mind clings to the supernatural, and in particular to the *bad* supernatural, if I may so express it, which it fears, rather than to the descriptions of purity, which it not only does not dread, but with which it is ashamed to compare itself, and therefore in a sense shrinks from, can realise that the new power was, perforce, to be one of no ordinary reputation; nay, more, that there were characteristics and features which he must be possessed of to make him the proper person for the occasion. We begin to see here a political significance, and the religious supremacy of the saint over the dragon of paganism is mixed up with, if not replaced by, the supremacy over Pendragon, which, it would appear, was the emblem of the Britons and the special standard and device of King Arthur.

* Innes, p. 113.

It was the more difficult because Arthur, or the historical Arthur, at least, waged war as a Christian knight against the Saxons as *pagans;* and was, moreover, of irreproachable character in knightly honour and morals. As such an opponent could not be readily unseated, it is evident that the most politic measure was to throw doubt and mystery about his very existence, as, indeed, during his life was done about his origin, by those who, envious of his influence and goodness, sought and finally succeeded in overcoming him, though the attempt was fatal to his adversary.

That the British standard was a dragon in very ancient times is indicated in Drayton's 'Poly-Olbion:'*

"And from the top of Brith, so high and wondrous steep,
Where Dinas Emris stood, showed where the serpents fought,
The *White* that tore the *Red;* from whence the prophet wrought
The Briton's sad decay then shortly to ensue."

In this we appear to have the two standards of the Saxons and Cymry or other branches of the Celts; at all events, internecine Celtic strife or outward opposition. The White may, I think, be identified with the Gael or the Saxons from the following.

Tytler, in his 'History of Scotland,' writes thus in describing the Scotch paraphernalia:—"There were carried before the kings and nobles into battle rich banners, upon which the figures of a white horse, of a raven, or of a fighting warrior were

* See Tytler's 'Hist. of Scotland' as to the English dragon standard.

curiously wrought in gold, and not unfrequently decorated with jewels. In the Battle of the Standard (1138, David I) the royal Scottish banner was embroidered with the figure of a dragon, around which rallying point, when the day was going against them, the flower of the Scottish army crowded in defence of their sovereign."*

The raven of course is Scandinavian, the dragon Pictish, and the white horse would be generally set down to the Saxons. I consider this Gaelic also, because the Saxons were not horsemen; with the exception of their leaders, the Saxon warriors stand as infantry between the equine ancient Britons and Romans, and the Norman knights. True, the Saxons revered the white horse, but so did the Britons; and the preponderance is in favour of the latter, not only from their being horsemen, but also because, in the coins given by Camden, there are forty British with the horse and ten with dragons, and not one Saxon with either.

The Cymry extended as far north as to include Loch Lomond, and being the same as the Welsh, and the people of Cornwall, Devon, and part of Somerset, would probably have had the same device. The late Mr. George Chambers, author of "Caledonia," thought so, and even had an engraving made of what he considered the original ensign of Scotland, viz. a dragon, as I was informed by Dr. Laing, of the Signet Library in Edinburgh, who promised me, if he possibly could, to obtain a copy for me; but his own search in the Signet

* Tytler's 'Hist. of Scotland,' vol. ii, p. 423, ed. 1829.

Library and mine in the Advocates' Library have been unsuccessful, though he assured me he had several copies in some one of his books. Be this as it may, it is admitted that, as compared with England, Southern Scotland was occupied by the same people, has still the same Arthurian traditions, and lays claim to the special Arthurian localities bearing nearly the same names in the north and south; and this being so, it seems impossible to recognise it as Arthurland without recognising Arthur's emblem the dragon, although that part of the story seems less defined in the north in *tradition* than in the south. But though tradition is silent (*i. e.* if it be possible to divest Arthur of his dragons), yet in symbols the north is very prominent. While it is true we have no St. George, we have a host of northern knights represented in his exact position and action, as on the various seals before you. But more, royalty assumes its supremacy over the dragon, not through any saint or representative, but in the Crown itself, on the great seals of Scotland, those from Alexander III to Robert II being extremely demonstrative.

I must here express my thanks to that learned heraldic writer and artist, Mr. Henry Laing, of Edinburgh, who has kindly made these seals for me for your inspection, and which I have had enlarged on the diagrams.

Description of Seals.

The first royal Scotch seal we have on record is that of Duncan II, A.D. 1094; it is of imperfect preservation, and, as might be expected from its

date, crude in art; but it is at least an emblem of knighthood.

That of Edgar, four years later, represents the monarch sitting or legislating, and in this we find two indications which fast ripen into very remarkable symbols. Edgar was established king of the whole north country by his Saxon uncle, Edgar Atheling; he reigned undisturbed over his Celtic and Teutonic subjects, and his seal bears emblems which, as elucidated by those of his successors, indicate the Celtic dragon by the triple claw and by the round balls, the probably still retained emblem of the former Teutonic sun-worship; while superior to both are the *fleur-de-lis*—cross—sceptre, and the sword of conquest which introduced it.

Alexander I, A.D. 1107, is the first who shows on his seal the warrior knight *and* the legislating king. So far the banner has no device, unless the double and triple-pointed streamers indicate the dragon's tail, or the mouth and tongue. This is by no means imaginary, as the ensign Draconarius was used by the Romans in common with the eagle; and the dragon was the emblem of many nations conquered by them, Parthians, Dacians, and many others. It appears as such on Trajan's column, and in an ancient delineation resembles almost exactly the northern banner, the representation of which as an ordinary flag is, I think, a modern art error;* the fluttering of these dracontic points in the wind being a matter for notice, as they are graphically described in such language by Ammianus Marcellinus.

* Montfaucon, vol. iv, pl. xiv.

The round balls in the seal of Edgar now unmistakably represent the sun on each side of the monarch, and the influence in his reign was Teutonic.

This we may infer from David I, A.D. 1124, who adopted the same seal, and who passed his youth at the Court of England. Under his rule, Mr. Skene says, "the Celtic element became one to be controlled and kept down, and any attempt to vindicate ancient Celtic rights and privileges to be suppressed as rebellion against the Crown." But this must mean after his defeat by England in the "Battle of the Standard." Succeeded by his grandson, Malcolm IV, a minor, surnamed the "maiden," the suppressed Celtic element burst forth, and all the force of Ergadia, under Somerled, was brought to bear against the young king newly crowned, at Scone, in A.D. 1153. With the exception of the Earl of Fife, who, however, was connected with the older Celtic constitution, his great adherents turned against him. These he defeated, invading Galloway thrice, and made peace with Somerled, who was finally slain in a second attack upon him. He conciliated both sides after this, or at least attempted to do so, and restoring Donald, the son of Malcolm Macbeth, one of his prisoners, to freedom, gave him the earldom of Ross, but gave the lands of the earldom of Moray which Donald claimed to Norman barons. This trafficking with both procured him the character of weakness notwithstanding his successes. His symbols are immensely characteristic, for while he retained the same seal as in the two preceding reigns, with its Teutonic significance, his disposition to conciliate the Celts is given in as

graphic an illustration of serpent alliance and surroundings as the most prominent of the Egyptian, or of the Hindu symbols.

In 1165 William the Lion succeeded his brother Malcolm on the throne, and forthwith appeared a most extraordinary document. It is a document on the line of royal succession, and the whole list of Pictish kings previously recognised is studiedly omitted. This plain insult declared the policy of the new king to his northern subjects; while in the south the influence of England was as completely disregarded, the whole policy being to force into prominence the royal line of the Gaelic race, the pedigree of William being given through a long list of mythic Irish kings—the people, indeed, most closely allied to the nation of Arthur, and pursuing the same politico-religious course. The genealogy is traced up to Scota, daughter of Pharaoh, King of Egypt. Twenty-two years afterwards a second chronicle appeared, in which the Pictish kings are restored, but in this case, as subsequent in date to the kings of Dalriada, producing almost the same effect, namely, the primacy of the Gaelic race. Meanwhile, however, great events had taken place.

It is only necessary to look at the seal of William the Lion to see all this feeling clearly portrayed. Its stern severity, divested of every emblem, shows distinctly a breaking away from all alliances, and a determination to rule only with the sword. The reverse is quite as expressive; painfully rigid without a single ornament, and not even a device on the shield, it is emphatic as the words "no quarter." He invaded England, but was taken prisoner, and

was released on surrendering the independence of his kingdom. It is not my intention to enter into the fluctuations and disputes this act and the restoration of that independence gave rise to; but the object of the second chronicle to which I have referred was to show an antiquity in the race of Scottish kings which should place them too far off to admit the argument of primacy of unity in British rule claimed by England, and by which England claimed supremacy. Nor does it appear to have been without effect, as England, two years after the document appeared, restored to Scotland its independence for a fine.

This was endeavoured to be made impressive on the accession of Alexander III, who, with his predecessor Alexander II, assumed the lion as a badge, and from that moment used the most powerfully expressive symbols to show that the Pictish, Celtic element was crushed.

Alexander III introduces a beautifully enriched seal, which brings before us a new feature, and almost raises up the counterpart of St. George and the Dragon.

We have already seen that the Scottish royal descent was traced in imagination to Scota, daughter of the King of Egypt, but the tradition of Pharaoh's daughter being pursued by the dragon is prevalent throughout the Highlands,—in other words, the contest of the Picts with the Scots, the Picts still retaining their national emblem, which appears to have been derived from the East or Egypt before being used by the Scots. The Gnostics also retained the serpent emblem. And now that the Picts were

to be represented as crushed, the Scottish king sits on his regal chair with each foot upon a dragon,—curiously enough, or studiedly as the case may be, the precise position of Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis, who has under his feet two crocodiles as dragons. John Balliol assumes the sceptre as his only emblem, but takes the badge of the lion on his knightly shield; as he threw off his allegiance to England, he of course needed the whole Celtic support, and we find no serpent or dragon *subjugation* under his feet.

Bruce, too martial to seek assistance, placed very modestly two little snakes under his feet, apparently for merely keeping up a precedent; and lest the Celtic Picts should feel aggrieved he raised the dragons to surround his shield. He then attacked and defeated the English, and feeling his full power, atoned for laxity on that point by the most florid exhibition of the subjugation of the Pictish element, his very throne consisting of subjugated dragons. For, his brother taking the throne of Ireland, it became necessary to show the Scottish line direct from there without Pictish alliance.

His son, David II, confirmed this symbolism. Edward Balliol drove David from the throne. To do this he would of course seek the friendship of David's *least* friendly subjects, and we find his seal perfectly free from any such device.

Robert Stewart, in a most beautiful seal, restored it; but here for the first time it appears probably as a heraldic ornament, for although the debased dragons are unmistakable, he introduces the serpent

in his inscription on the reverse, and from this date, 1390, it disappears altogether.

It seems impossible that, as with every rise and fall of the Pictish influence, the dragon appears and disappears, to conclude that the dragon was accidental, or did not represent that influence. Hence I think we may fairly assume that, in common with some other northern nations, the pagan Pictish device was a dragon or serpent, and that the suppressing it by the Christian Gaelic princes was an operation entirely of the Arthurian class. It is clear that it was no accident, but a custom of the times, for Edward I, who tyrannised dreadfully in Scottish matters, treated the Scotch lion in the same way on his seal.

Mr. Thomas Innes and others recount the various authorities who assert that the Picts were so called from painting themselves over with pictures of *various animals*, and it seems to me that amongst these the dragon would be prominent, as the serpent was with the North American Indians.

From the manipulation, suppression, and destruction of documents between the Scots and Picts, and the Scots and English, it is extremely difficult to prove many positions that, however, are reasonably arrived at, but the valuable monuments preserved by John of Fordun help us to often fair conclusions.

Although it hardly concerns my special subject, I must in justice mention the symbolism of the Stewarts, which, while perhaps of a less heroic caste, indicated a wiser and juster policy. Their symbolism, prior to Mary, is wholly indicative of

paternal government, steadfastness, and durability; and here political symbolism ceases, as in this family English and Scottish and Pictish interests were combined, concurrent with their avoidance of the suppressed dragon. The Tudors conformably revived it, the great seal of Elizabeth showing the Welsh dragon, which is now burlesqued into the unicorn.

In the age of Mary symbolism was carried to an extent of fancy which divested it of its previous meaning, and combined Arthurian, Phœnician, Celtic, Teutonic, and Greek and Roman classical emblems, with either a very fluctuating or, perhaps, no political significance whatever. At this period the Celtic dragon is given on the seal of Mary as a unicorn.

Not only did the national opposition of Celt and Saxon exist after the Christianising of the latter, but the differences of churches, though of the same general faith, distinguished and divided Christian Britain, the Saxons deriving their Christianity from Italy, the Cymry from an apparently Oriental source, conveyed to Ireland at some remote and not very clearly defined period. That the Irish Christians were those who introduced the new religion into Britain appears from the fact of frequent and direct intercourse between the Cymry of Wales, South-western England, and Southern Scotland, as the Scotch, *i. e.* the Irish Gael, occupied the western shores of the coast of Wales.* It appears to me that the original Christianity of the Irish Scots, which they conveyed to North Britain, was of the

* 'Arthurian Localities,' p. 21.

same type as that which subsequently became consolidated in a less pure form as the Greek Church, and that it proceeded direct from Asia Minor or Egypt, or both.

Indeed, we find that in a very early settlement of Christians at Glastonbury, where St. Patrick figures prominently, it was Egyptian. In such a case we may be sure it would bring Egyptian symbolism with it, and if so it would at first find fruitful ground, and everything in early Irish Christianity is highly symbolical of dragon and serpent worship, or of its subjugation.

I cannot doubt that there was an actual and historical King Arthur, and that it was this historical personage, who figured somewhere about the period assigned to him in his wars with the Saxons, that was prominently brought forward in the restoration of the "Round Table" about the time of the Norman conquest, and resuscitated in the famous Order of the Garter, although in this case the name of George took the place of Arthur, as more welcome to the English; and I think the reasoning of Mr. Skene and of Mr. John Stuart Glennie, as to such a warlike prince fighting his battles in what is now Southern Scotland, along the line of the Roman wall, quite sufficient for their purpose; and I go with the latter in his impression that the King Arthur of poetry was a brightly coloured picture of a *pre*-mediæval personage and corresponding events, and am quite willing to be convinced, nay, upon other grounds than any yet shown, or than any which I shall adduce to-night, to prove the probability of the north having been the cradle of Arthurian story,

and I only differ from them because I go still further than they do.

I cannot consider that all the events refer to one person. While, indeed, we have a legend in Skye which carries such tradition even farther north, I cannot think that all that has been said and written of King Arthur in the south is either, on the one hand, pure invention, or, on the other, misappropriation. Nor do I see how the plain but blunt and honest Cymric leader, as Mr. Glennie describes him, could have left his kingdom in Britain, and yet figured so far south as we find him doing on the Continent. I think the matter is capable of explanation thus. The name of Arthur was a name of renown and of considerable antiquity. In the struggles of the new religion with paganism deadly animosity must have been frequently aroused, and a chief or prince who became a convert would not unfrequently find himself antagonistic to his neighbours, but often also to his own people and to his blood relations, who would undoubtedly try to remove him. In such a case it would become necessary for him to take the field and to advocate his new religion by the sword; and I think it by no means improbable that there was an order or confraternity of such princes, whose distinctive names, while retained by their own *clans*, were merged in the Arthurian or Christian chivalry into which they were admitted. All was done under the name of King Arthur, who was invoked as St. George later on, or any other patron saint of a people engaged in a religious war, and that Arthur was to the Christian Briton as complete a cover as Brahma or Buddha to the

Indians, and was invoked to avoid bringing the more *sacred name into common use.* By this means the apparent ubiquity of Arthur and his somewhat uncertain era are both accounted for.

This may perhaps appear clearer if we look up some points not hitherto considered, for in all such histories we have only certain prominent features or outlines.

I have already mentioned a remarkable tradition in Skye, and that takes us to a very remote quarter, but one in the high road from the land shown by Mr. Skene and others to have been occupied by the Cymry—the Arthurian nation. Now if we go to Southern England, that is Glastonbury, the supposed place of Arthur's burial according to the traditions of the south, or if we go to France, the supposed place of Arthur's burial according to the traditions of Armorica, we find in each a prominent mound,—St. Michael's Mount in the one case, Glastonbury Tor in the other. Near each is a celebrated island, which bears in both cases the same name, that of Avalon, in France Aiguilon, where, again, in each case Arthur is said to have been buried. But the Tor at Glastonbury is dedicated to St. Michael, so that we have in each case St. Michael's Mount and the island of Avalon.

Moreover, rightly or wrongly (and I am not now going to enter into that question), we have at Carnac, near Mount St. Michael, a vast serpentine arrangement of stones, which is esteemed by some to have been a serpent deity; while on Glastonbury Tor we have what has never yet been, I believe, drawn attention to, a vast serpentine causeway, in

the form of a most perfect reptile. St. Michael, the representative of the true faith, is *par excellence* the subduer of the serpent and his worship, and in each of these places occupies, as it were, the very head of the serpent. There can be no question as to the stones at Carnac having been connected with religious rites, and the figure of the serpent is to be found rudely carved on several stones in their vicinity. I venture, therefore, to assume that here was a god of the ancient Celtic people. The serpent on the Tor must be seen between Street and Glastonbury to be understood. For comparatively small mounts nothing can be much more impressive and imposing than these two hills, the latter especially for processions. That at Glastonbury is so striking that, with the peculiar topographical features of Palestine, and the closely agreeing ones of Scotland in the vicinity of ancient places of interment, &c., in my remembrance, I felt certain on seeing it that it was in ancient times an object of worship. Without dwelling on the fact of tradition informing us that the Beltain fires once burned on its summit, I looked about for evidences of a different kind. I traversed the whole district—a very extensive one, and from all points this impressive mount is the one great feature: the vast camps of Cadbury or Camelot, Compton Dundon, Maesbury, Brent Knoll, and others enclose it in a *cordon* of protecting forts; while along the old road known as the Roman road to Old Sarum, but which was originally an undoubted British way, are serpentine arrangements of sepulchral burrows looking down upon the mound bearing this vast serpentine causeway. Cadbury or

Camelot is noted for the natural serpentine forms in its hilly vicinity, which latter approach very much to the living moraine in the present time. The word is Celtic, and indicative of windings:

"Let Camel of her course and curious windings boast."

But the great wood known as Selwood, to the east of Glastonbury, has something remarkably important in its name. Various meanings have been given to the name, too well known for me to repeat them here; but so certain did I feel that they only expressed some modern meanings which the Roman and the Saxon had turned into obliterations of the original, that I did not rest till I had found a local meaning for the great wood. Dropping the s, which appears to me to have arisen from the possessive case, Els-wood, afterwards for ease called Selwood, I find the El in the local ancient dialect is equivalent to angel, and in the Syriac and Hebrew to "god." It is found with some slight local variations in the various Celtic dialects. Hence the wood of the god.

In the neighbouring county of Dorset is a vast sculptured figure, 180 feet high, of great antiquity, often referred to in the neighbourhood and by antiquaries acquainted with the locality by the title of El or Eli, which, with Helstone or Elstone further west in Cornwall, appears to me reasonable evidence. Here, then, was the wood of the god, hence the god.

Now in Scotland all these features appear to be wanting; but they are not so. In the direct line from the Loch Lomond of the Cymry to Skye, with its remarkable legend, is a loch which bears the

same name, popularly called Loch Nell, as variously translated as Selwood. Dr. Richmond, who has been kindly aiding me in my researches, gave me the old Gaelic as Loch na aill, again the loch of the angel or god. Close by this is a gigantic serpentine mound, and leading to it a serpentine stone avenue, combining, therefore, the features of both Carnac and Glastonbury. In the head of this serpent mound is a sepulchral chamber, formed of vast blocks of granite; and between this and Loch Lomond lies Loch Awe, and in it an island celebrated for the berries or apples which grow there, a precise equivalent to Avalon (the isle of apples), alike in France and South Britain. The island was traditionally guarded by a huge serpent or dragon, slain by Fruoc. The Gaelic poem, well translated by Mr. Hamerton, relates this, and how the knight in his endeavour to win a lady slays the dragon, and dies from the encounter himself. The sepulchral serpent mound is, it appears to me, the grave of this hero, and towering above all are the vast cones of that sublime mountain Cruachan. Here, then, are the same precise features in France, Scotland, and Southern England, all in Celtic localities; this alone was wanting to complete the Arthurian features in Scotland.

The evidence points to all such localities as places of great pagan occupation and worship; and as it is impossible to suppose that all the British or Celtic people were *uniformly* converted to the Christian faith—that is, not all at the same period, as indeed the history of mankind tends to prove the great natural longing for ceremonies of the

pagan style of worship, and the fierce encounters and desperate bloodshed where the opposite religions came in contact—I am constrained to think that there must have been a season of terrible religious internecine warfare in the British nation. The desperate and bloody struggle on the isle of Mona between the Romans and leaders of the Celtic religion proves how severely they were disposed to contest this point; and although they no longer openly opposed the Roman military power or the Roman pagan deities, they were not, as I think it will be admitted that no people ever yet were, *converted* by the sword. Passive such may be, tacitly they may behold or even join in the enforced and obligatory worship; but it would be at best like the follower bowing in the house of Rimmon, and not as a matter of conviction.

If this be so, we have then two great periods and conditions to account for, that of semi-Celtic, semi-Roman paganism, and the period from the introduction of Christianity into Ireland and West Britain (which appears to have been of very early date, and which clings to all the churches of the west and north still), up to the time when the Saxons became themselves permanently Christian. During these periods, so long as the Britons offered no opposition of force to the Roman government and no insult to their gods, the Britons would certainly have been unmolested in the *quiet* and private celebration of any religious rites, especially in the remote districts which are indicated by Arthurian localities. Nay, many Romans would have joined them from a similarity if not identity of

worship of some of their deities, as, indeed, we find was the case.

There is abundant evidence of the worship of Mithras, which includes both sun and serpent worship, by the Romans in Britain, and still more of worship to the gods of the *locality*, and therefore to the ancient gods of the country; and it seems probable that in these Celt and Roman would have joined. It is certain that we find many sacred British remains unmolested where the Romans have left evidence of location. The Romans occupied and endeavoured to denationalise the strongholds and military resorts of the Britons, and only attacked the Druids because of their inflaming military opposition. And it is not probable that a polytheistic nation would object to the worship of gods other than their own, but rather, in the case of the Romans, that they would amalgamate the new deities in their own pantheontic list, more especially where they bore a close resemblance, if not identity, as the sun, the serpent, and deities having attributes so closely allied that Cæsar could name their deities after the Roman gods as Mercury, Apollo, &c., purely from the similarity of their functions and that over which they presided.

A paper of this brevity allows no scope for quotations, and I have endeavoured by illustration through diagrams to supply much that quotations effect.

A celebrated monument found at York, and still preserved there, gives the whole ceremony of Mithras stabbing the bull, with the usual attendant serpent and other emblems; a portion of a sculptured Mithras and bull has been found at Chester, and

Mithraic monuments at many other places, amongst others in Cambeck Fort in Cumberland.

On diagram 4, I have given a Roman altar found at Tynemouth, and now at Newcastle, on which are evidences of serpent and sun worship. But the word *Cambeck* induces me to draw your attention to the prominent introduction of this word in all Arthurian places.

Now Cam, Cambus, Camus, Kaimes, &c., mean crooked, winding, sinuous,—in short, serpentine; and we have the most striking evidences of the selection of Arthurian localities from such natural features or the creation of such artificial forms in those localities as several of my diagrams exhibit.

It appears to me, then, that the first princes and chiefs who embraced Christianity in the west and north, both in France and Britain, enforced the new religion on their non-consenting subjects and even neighbouring clans by the sword, and particularly at those places where the old worship was conducted; that they banded together for this purpose, or pursued the enforcement of their new doctrine independently, as a species of religious knight-errantry, under a title generally recognised as indicative of valour, honour, and chastity,—in short, a high code of morality. That there were probably "Round Tables" of a higher and lower degree; the first composed of princes of similar rank, who only seldom met, such being necessarily secret societies, the knowledge of which appears to have been handed down to the date of the Order of the Garter by tradition, and appearing again in 1356 in something like the same form, viz. the Germanic constitution

known as the "Golden Bull," by which seven electors nominated the Emperor, and which still crops up in the occasional unity of the crowned heads of Europe. The second belonging to each prince as the head, with a confraternity of his own knights and nobles to surround it; and though at first secret, cropping up again in times of emergency in the reigns of Ina, King of the West Saxons, Offa, King of the Mercians, Ethelbert, and others, till Alfred, the Arthur of his day, ordained the meeting twice in the year, in words like Arthur's own, that the members "should keep themselves from sin, and receive or aid the right;" hence the palatinates of England and our two Houses of Parliament. The places selected for meeting would, no doubt, often be the scenes of their successes at the pagan places of worship; hence those places, once devoted to the Beltine fires and sun-worship, would be named after the introducer or enforcer of the new religion, and would perpetuate the fame of Arthur and his Round Table, and become popularly described as the table itself.

Evidences accumulate as we proceed with the investigation, and the limits of a single paper are not sufficient to record them; but it is important that they should be noted as far as possible by the observer, as from constant removal and destruction of relics they are becoming continually fainter. Of these, some of the most remarkable indicate a custom the evidences of which are not yet obliterated in Rome, though they are nearly so in Britain. The great highway south from Rome, the highway towards the sun at his height, which to a sun-

worshipping people must have been a *via sacra*, is lined even to this day with the great tombs—I had almost said tomb temples—of the dead. Mr. Thomas Wright informs us that the road leading out from the west side of London, which he describes as "the grand route to the west of Britain," had on each side the sepulchral monuments of the great; this was apparently a pretty general custom amongst the pagans, and we have something very similar in Oriental sun-worshipping nations. The south and the west would be the most appropriate directions for such a purpose: the one especially with a people using the rites of cremation, a tendering of the dust of the beloved to him who had claimed the spirit, and offered to him on his highest throne, *i. e.* at his greatest elevation; the other indicative of his having departed with the spirit into the darkness of the west.

The great western road would either directly or by one of its branches have led the traveller to Old Sarum, in the neighbourhood of the great sun and serpent temples of Stonehenge and Avebury. Its continuation, the road from Old Sarum up to Weston-super-Mare, is still traceable, and is marked on the Ordnance maps. Along this road, as I have already stated, are the remains of the sepulchral monuments, which, like those on the Via Appia and Via Latina, near Rome, lined the course of the living through the tombs of the dead, we find a number of beautifully serpentine arrangements of early British barrows, as their contents, the variegated glass beads so like the Egyptian, clearly show. Those still remaining—and some have been

removed even last year (six out of a beautiful group of seven)—all point to most remarkable objects,—the White Horse and its vast camp at Westbury, the great Glastonbury Tor, and the impressive serpentine passage between the Cheddar cliffs.

Cheddar, it appears, is the same as Cadre, applied to Cadre Idris in Wales, and indicates the chair or seat of sublimity. The Cheddar Pass might be termed, and would no doubt be in the eyes of the nature-worshipper, a vast natural intaglio sculpture of a serpent in length, from the great serpentine arrangement of barrows at Black Down, which it nearly reaches by a beautifully green winding gorge after the road is left, through which runs a clear stream, which mysteriously disappears and reappears at the serpent's mouth at Cheddar; it would measure about the extent of the great stone avenue at Carnac in Brittany. This disappearing and again reappearing river would to the sun or nature worshipper realise the river or ocean of *night*, by which Arthur was, as mentioned further on, conveyed in his wounded, death-like state to the isle of Avalon, agreeing exactly with the Egyptian boat of the sun, sailing back to the place of rising—*inverted*, as though sailing round the globe at the antipodes, opening a grand question of how nearly they approached the knowledge of the earth being a sphere, and the dark valley in which, in Hesiod's poems, the dragon received the sun in the Hesperides. The evident reference to the non-setting or midnight sun of the north must have come through Scythian traditions.

Here nature deals in the most fanciful and horrible, and yet graphic likeness of the human figure and countenance, to say nothing of every animal resemblance in the stalactite caverns, one only of the latter of which I introduce. Here were natural caves fitted for Mithraic worship, with nature's sculptures to adorn them. Here the most vast and terrible forms to be propitiated. Here the miraculous and disappearing and again rising river, which in olden days, before the Roman invasion was a locality, plainly proved by the bone caves in the Mendips to have been one occupied by earliest settlers, probably of the Celtic race. In the vicinity, as in Brittany and in Northern Argyllshire, are vast monuments of a prehistoric people, whose similar monuments I have found extending down to Auvergne in Central France. These, in short, were the great pagan strongholds, to be overcome and reduced by the new religionists, the great seats of sun and serpent worship, the good and evil deities of the pagan nature-worshippers.

One more point. The great Arthurian battles, whether in the north or in the south, are given as *twelve*. Nothing is more probable than that the sun-worshippers, who we find were highly astronomical, had distinct ceremonies for each month in the year, as the new moon feasts of the East seem to parallel. The worship had to be put down root and branch, piece by piece, festival by festival, and that would give us just twelve such battles,—in short, an overthrow of each special ceremony. I find that Arthur, after receding southward in, let us say, *the winter solstice* —for the name of the great militant regenerator

would soon cover alike all his actions and the events; in short, he would be identified with what he was mixed up in, whether for or against,—after receding to the south or south-west—Armorica—he returns and wages war against his enemies. He rises, may I say? at the extreme east of Britain, Richborough in Kent, pursues his course westward to Winchester, fights and pursues all the way to Cornwall, where in a great struggle he is mortally wounded—may I say sets? and is conveyed mysteriously and in darkness again *eastward* through the great lake to Avalon, where he is buried in secrecy, but with the certainty of his rising again duly prophesied. Northward, *i. e.* in Scotland, he pursues an opposite course, and his conquests are nearly consecutive from west to east; but it will be remembered that traditions, the farther we go north, are governed by the great luminary. There he is triumphant in reducing his obscuration, and in a certain latitude overcoming it altogether on his course from west to east, *i. e.* at night; and no doubt this was the line of ceremony, if I may so express it, adopted from the Clyde to the Forth.

All the great Celtic monuments when they are examined indicate the east and west, or *vice versâ*. The island of Arran is divided in that way, so are Knapdale and Kantyre, Ardnamurchan, &c.

In the very elaborate and carefully studied work just published by Dr. P. Hately Waddell (to whom I am indebted for a recognition of my own somewhat arduous researches), entitled 'Ossian and the Clyde,' the progress of the Fingalian conquests lies in the same direction towards the Forth; and

without going into the question of the authenticity of the poems, which is ably argued out by Dr. Waddell, I may say that I have no more doubt about an actual Ossian than I have of an actual Arthur; nay, more, from his being described* as witnessing the religious rites of the Scandinavian gods, Brumo and Loda, with contempt, and *defying* their machinations *with the sword*, I am constrained to look on the Fingals and their descendant Ossian as the first of those bearing the banner of a new religion, though as yet very indefinitely understood, who, without adopting the Arthurian title, which was probably not at that date assumed, attempted to put down the old pagan worship by the sword. Time will not permit me to point out the curious relations mentioned by Mr. J. Stewart Glennie between the Arthurian and Fingalian traditions, the latter being applicable to Ireland; but I know from personal examination that in the vicinity of the latter are vast and terrible natural appearances, as of the human form, like those my diagrams show in Cheddar and Auvergne.

But Ireland recalls the story of St. Patrick and the serpents or dragons which he overcame; these were evidently serpent-worshippers. As I have shown elsewhere, the dragon of St. George or St. Michael was the dragon of the pagan religion; knighthood and chivalry were as old or older than history; witness the combats between Roman warriors and knights on horseback with the lance, the exact parallels of modern encounter.

The combat between Aruns, a son of Tarquin,

* Waddell, p. 342.

and the consul, L. Junius Brutus, in which both as armed knights ran each other through with the lance, reads like a modern tournament encounter; as also that of Herminius and Mamilius. Metino, the Latin general, in his challenge to the Roman knights, attacked and slain by the youthful Titus Manlius, sounds like the story of David and Goliath.

And modern chivalry was merely a revival; Alexander's youthful fame arose from the management of an unruly horse, and the centaurs and Amazons take us far back to no sham tournaments.

These, however, are modern stories; the real Amazons were Indian. We may go back to more historical persons of easier identity, as when fair Helen describes to aged Priam her natural brother Castor as "*the skilful knight on horse.*" Or even to the Aryan, perhaps Scythian-Celtic conquests in India, described in the Mahá-Bhárata, in which is an account of a chariot tournament which brings before us the ancient British prowess with the chariot, and the dazzling scenes of Ilium. In the great war of Bhárat, in the Indian poem, Arjuna, clad in golden mail, achieves wonders with sword, bow, and chariot. We have here also the same serpent-worship and attendant features that is found still in India, and was so prominent among the Greeks and Celtic people. The features in the accounts of Krishna and Apollo are very similar, and my opinion is that the original mystic Arthur is an Oriental,—indeed, is figured in 'Arjuna' with his high code of chivalry. He dies in the same way when, after the destruction of his great enemy Duryodhana,

who had insulted his wife Draupadi, he is going to Mount Meru after the decline of his power.

Cæsar describes the condition of the Britons in words that would almost equally have suited the people of Rome in its early days; there were two classes only, the upper being divided into just what we have been considering, the priesthood and knights—precisely the two characteristics of a church militant seen in St. George and Arthur. We have referred to the personal encounters of the Roman knights; such encounters sometimes took place between the Romans and knights of other armies, and amongst others the Gauls. The Gauls were the older nation, and it seems probable that they introduced the custom.

The Gallic warriors of Britain were masters in horsemanship, and could only have maintained their warlike equine adroitness by continual practice, while the custom in all warlike nations of combats between chiefs leads to the conclusion that knightly encounters were early events in this country.

That the Arthurian or ancient British code of moral chivalry was much admired, both by the Normans and English, there can be no doubt, from the estimation in which the round table was held at the Conquest and the institution of the Order of the Garter. But it is manifest that there were obstacles to its nominal introduction, although its high principles were as evidently acted on.

Finally, St. George and his dragon is but an artistic ideality of the triumph of skill over a pagan barbarian in its military aspect, as shown on diagram 6, being a device repeatedly found on Roman

monuments in Britain, though most unfairly applied to British knights, while in its religious aspect it is certainly the triumph of truth over error.

Of the Mahá-Bhárata.

History is conveyed to us through poetry. The grand poems of India take us, indeed, far into the past. They are themselves but a collection of oral traditions of evidently great previous antiquity; and the poems themselves, or at least the dates of their heroes—as Rama, for instance—were supposed by Sir William Jones to have existed upwards of 2000 years before our era, though placed by other writers at from 1000 to 2000 years.

The events in the poems of the Poet Laureate and in those of the Mahá-Bhárata will be seen by a slight reference to be very similar. The latter and the Rámáyana carry us back to just such an age as Arthur is represented to be trying to restore—where all was virtue, and therefore full of joy, and where abundance reigned as a consequence. (See extract, Canto 6, "The King," and vol. i, Mahá-Bhárata.)

The whole history of Arjuna is a counterpart of that of Arthur. If, as I have assumed, Arthur, either in name or person, was a figure of an ardent enforcer of the worship of a pure religion, and in the name of his deity of a high code of morals, we find Arjuna described as the friend and kinsman of the god Krishna, whose identity with Apollo, the sun-god, has already been mentioned. Arjuna is described as "fitted in every way for high deeds."

Then, again, the position of supremacy of a

superior, a relative of Arjuna's, was effected by the latter. A perfectly "white horse," which is distinctly identified with the sun, is set to run its course; no restraint is put upon it, but it is left to run its own course, and all must follow where it goes. In every country where it goes the people and their rulers must give adoration, or be coerced by the terrible darts of Arjuna. The journey lasts for a year, and leads to hitherto unknown regions and people. The adventures are *twelve*, in each case the same in number. Popular expression seems to have connected the true Arthur with the sun, although that is a position really pertaining to the mystical Arthur. The historical Arthur or Arthurs, it seems to me, endeavoured to *overcome* this worship; but assuming the earlier position, it is clear that his queen would have represented the moon. It was the infidelity of Guinivere that caused his disasters, and in result his wound by his relative Modred. But we find a son of Arjuna, after swearing fealty, in open rebellion, the two fight personally, as in the case of Arthur and Modred, and the son severs Arjuna's *head* from his body with a *crescent-shaped arrow*, but the sun-god Krishna foretells that all will be right in the end. Then follows the distress and wailing of the women, Chitrángadá and Ulúpi :* so like the following.

> " . . . . And from them rose
> A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
> And, as it were one voice, an agony
> Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
> All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
> Or hath come since the making of the world."

* See pp. 410, 411, and index, 'Hist. of India,' Wheeler.

But Ulúpi, remembering that the *serpents* possessed a jewel which would restore Arjuna to life, sent off to the *lower world* for it. Here a great *serpent* nation is discovered. After consultation the jewel is not given; hosts are led into the nether world, and the serpent Raja coerced, and at the request of Krishna he consents to apply the charm to Arjuna. It restores him to life, "healed of all his wounds:"

> ". . . . I am going a long way
> With these thou seest—if, indeed, I go
> (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—
> To the island-valley of Avilion,
> * * * * *
> Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So far the course of the white horse, which had a saffron-coloured tail and a black spot on its right ear, and on the forehead of which was a gold plate inscribed with the royal name of him whose supremacy Arjuna enforced, had been towards the *south*—may I say the *winter solstice?* Now, however, he proceeds northwards, and all the Rajas submit, and join Arjuna with their armies; and it passed the northern mountain, and reached the sea, and "entered it," and then again rose out of the sea after an interval. It still pursued its course northwards, passing along the mountain Sumaru. Here a glorious triumph awaits it: the enemy of Arjuna, and of him whom he represents, falls dead before it, but a "new life" is given him, and henceforth he adores Krishna and follows Arjuna; and Arjuna, with a magnificent retinue, comes to the city of him whose service he has been enforcing. And Krishna, the sun-god, goes forth to meet him, and then the great sacrifice

of the white horse, the Aswamedha, was celebrated.

The worship of the white horse had reached to the far isle of Britain—why should not the fame of its great follower, Arjuna, have come with it? The Greeks identified it with the cherubim, as in Hesiod's "Theogony in Eden." This all appears Indo-European; the whole story seems to have come over with the Indo-European languages, and the very course of its travel can be traced. The reverence for the white horse appears in almost all the Aryan faiths, and almost always associated with (either for or against) the serpent; while very similar impersonations abound in the early Latin and Etruscan mythologies of pre-Roman Italy, whose presiding serpent deity my friend Mr. Newman has graphically outlined. The superstition infected the apostate kings of Judah, who erected horses to the sun in the temple, which Josiah removed with other pagan idols.*

In the serpent city we find one serpent, Seshanaga, having a thousand heads—the origin, it appears to me, of *Pen*dragon; while the mystic magician Merlin is found in Vyása, the raiser of that wondrous vision on the banks of the Ganges, where all the dead slain in the great war of the Mahá-Bhárata were restored to the loving eyes of parents, children, spouses, and friends, the "leaders" in full armour seated in their chariots, and ascending out of the waters with all their armies arrayed as they were on the first day of the Mahá-Bhárata. All appeared in great glory and

* 2 Kings xi, 23.

splendour, and more beautiful than when they were alive; and all came with their own horses and chariots and banners and arms. And every one was in perfect friendship with the others, for enmity had departed from among them. Here appears to me certainly the triumph of the non-setting sun of the north.

Here was the esoteric condition which the later mysteries vainly strove to emulate!

But does the matter rest there?

Is chronology or mundane latitude a bound for such thoughts?

Do we not feel with Keats on this point, that we are—

> "Like some watcher of the skies,
> When a new planet swims into his ken;
> Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific with a wild surmise,
> *Silent,* upon a peak in Darien"?

Where is the naked barbarian from which it is argued we have emerged, and gradually heaped up civilisation? where the crude ideas and low superstition from which this wonderful thing which we are has *eliminated* and *fabricated to itself, as its mental wants demanded,* a highly cultivated and civilised religion? Are such ideas—and they are the most *ancient* we can find—low and barbarous, or even crude and undefined? Are they not all mind, all soul, all poetry? These early poems are as unburdened with the paraphernalia of artistic religion as they are with the gross idolatry of the idol-making savage.

The happy age they take us back to is not one of

naked savagery, but of a prosperity we vainly strive after—a civilisation we shall never attain; where the very artisans—for there was no listless idleness—were clad in pure garments, and decorated with ornaments of pure gold and jewels; where every man was true to his neighbour, and every spouse faithful and honest. Art is indeed spoken of, and of a high class,—resplendent armour, gorgeous apparel, magnificent chariots, but spoken of in a higher tone after being sublimated—after sinking below and then rising from the great waters; no laboured philosophy of metempsychosis in those early days, but a simple sinking into and rising again from the dark waters in resplendent light.

Do we not see in this a close approach to that purity from which man fell, and a promise of a redemption—a very counterpart, in short, of the Hebrew, but poetically rendered? There is simplicity, I grant, but it is the simplicity of absence from guile,—in other words, simple as purity itself.

There is one point, however, that differs from the Hebrew—namely, the pure garments and golden ornaments of every grade; but in the Indian poems this is evidently derived from the traditions of the brilliancy of the seraphic hosts, whose dazzling grandeur and sublime appearance could only be described in earthly language as brilliancy of armour, golden jewels, and shining raiment; hence the seraph, and the fiery serpent of the serpent-worshippers become identical. It was such a man who intercepted Joshua—such glistening raiment that was seen in the Transfiguration. This was the brilliancy which, like a flaming sword, could

no longer be looked on by eyes of the fallen ones.

No doubt there was a historical Arjuna, as there was a historical Arthur; but these were the mere blocks of marble, the mere lay figures, the mechanical canvas, as, in a higher sense, was the sun, on which, as a sort of artificial memory, the keepers of the oral faith hung and arranged their sublime traditions, and which from that moment lost half their beauty by their association with historical and degenerate personages. The primal poems, with their armour and weapons, their chariots and their knighthood, spoke of the battle of life, the battle of virtue against vice, the hope of a sure reward, and a restoration to glory under one great and single conquering arm.

The pale horse is identified with the moon, and here a subtlety arises between solar worship and sabian worship, which the limits of this paper do not allow me to enter upon. In the ninth strophe of the 117th hymn of the first book of the Rig-vedas the *mystic horse kills the monster serpent*—a legend which, while it recalls to our minds the figure of the most important promise, certainly could not have more graphic illustrations than those shown on my diagrams of the monuments of Somersetshire,—supported, indeed, by a similar graphic illustration in Berkshire, where the white horse is represented as rushing in fiery haste in the direction of the distant serpent temple of Avebury in Wiltshire.

The terms being *wounded* and *dying* are, in the Mahá-Bhárata, unmistakably applied to the setting

and passing away into darkness both of the sun and the moon, as under the form of two brothers enamoured of a beautiful nymph (Aurora) they fight so long and desperately that both perish miserably, and die in the night. And the Râmâyana refers to the descended sun as *passing from the western to the eastern ocean*, in the ocean *of night*, in the grotto, or in the *darkness*—the precise course taken by Arthur, who was then enclosed in the grotto or cave of Avalon.

"So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan,
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs."

NOTES UPON PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF MARY STUART DURING HER CAPTIVITY IN ENGLAND, 1569—1571.

BY HERBERT J. REID, ESQ., F.S.A., LIBRARIAN R.S.L.

[Read June 26th, 1895.]

VOLUME upon volume has been written respecting the unfortunate Mary Stuart (for whatever views one may hold respecting her, either as a woman or as a queen, unfortunate, both in her life and in her death, all will at the present day allow she was), and at first sight it would almost seem as if there was nothing more to be said or written respecting her.

Her life and actions have ever been fruitful subjects for criticism and controversy. Moralists, political adherents and adversaries, partisans of the Church of Rome and of the Reformed Church, have all of them disputed and wrangled respecting her every action, almost her every thought; and to such an extent have her biographers and critics gone, that a fair-sized volume would scarcely contain even the titles of their various works.

There is nevertheless, and always has been, a certain mysterious charm and attraction connected with and surrounding the name of Mary Stuart and her vicissitudes of fortune; and, while some doubt has been expressed as to the possession of the

ravishing beauty attributed to her, few persons will be prepared to deny her the possession of an irresistible but indescribable power of fascination or attraction, enabling her to win and to hold to her cause many staunch adherents, even to the close of her chequered and most unhappy career.

But it is not of Mary that I have to deal in this paper, but rather with certain intrigues in connection with her affairs, with letters and other documents thereto relating, together with proceedings in reference to her proposed marriage with the Duke of Norfolk.

Carefully packed away with many old and musty papers among the Archives of the Royal Society of Literature, it was one day my good fortune to light upon a clue to these matters, and I believe the documents I propose to quote have never yet been translated or printed. The memorandum which was my clue stated that Sir Cuthbert Sharpe, an eminent literary archæologist, somewhere about 1846 (but this date is doubtful) having ascertained the existence of certain Marian documents among the archives in the National Collection at Brussels, commissioned one of the custodians, M. Francisque Michel, to make excerpts therefrom, and that these had been presented by Sir Cuthbert Sharpe to the British Museum. This last statement I find upon inquiry to be an error. I have, however, been in communication with the principal librarian at Brussels, and he has most generously and courteously furnished me with considerable information; and, with extracts from the original documents, together with transcripts from other documents to

which I have been able to obtain access, I shall now endeavour to make a little more clear certain incidents in the life of Mary Stuart which may possibly interest, even if they do not tend to corroborate statements long in dispute, or even held to be erroneous or false. As in translation it would frequently be difficult, and certainly wearisome, to render into our English language the diplomatic forms and courtly phrases of the period, with all their stilted and ceremonial style, I have endeavoured merely to extract from lengthy official documents their evident intention and meanings, and to give the pith of the communication only, whenever possible.

The MSS. relating to Mary Stuart consist mainly of copies of the correspondence between, and reports made by, the notorious Ferdinand of Toledo, Duke of Alva, to his royal master Philip II of Spain; but incidentally one lights upon, from time to time, curious remarks respecting the condition of both England and Scotland at this interesting period. The series commences with notes supplied upon the verbal information of an Englishman named Pascal, who professes to have been injured by Sir William Cecil; smarting under his wrongs, he is anxious to avenge them, or, in other words, turn traitor, and supply such information as he could obtain to Spain. His statements, however, appear to have met with but scant recognition, presumably on account of their small importance. Next we come to reports made to their employer, the Duke of Alva, by two of his Scottish agents, or spies. The date of the earliest of these

documents seems to be March, 1569, but supplementary reports carry on the treasonable story for fully a twelvemonth more. These reports appear to be the originals, copies having been made and transmitted to the Spanish King by the Duke of Alva, accompanied by full descriptions of those furnishing them, together with critical and sometimes caustic remarks, by no means too complimentary to the authors.

At this date the Duke of Alva was Governor of Flanders, and it was in this capacity and as representing the King of Spain that he received the before-mentioned reports, carefully criticising them all before transmitting his copies with comments, and frequently with subtle advice, to his royal master. From them we gather also that the general opinion of his agents (and of many others) was that designs, not upon Scotland alone, but upon England also, had long been entertained by the French King, and that whatever promises had been attributed to him, he had no real intention of assisting Mary, as was somewhat widely believed, excepting in so far as would tend to serve his own ends and promote his designs, the more preferable measure being to favour and encourage the proposal for the marriage of Elizabeth with the Duke of Anjou. Upon the other hand, it is assumed that Elizabeth was at this time contemplating with all sincerity a suggestion for the marriage of her favourite the Earl of Leicester with Queen Mary, an old project mooted as far back as 1563. Now, however, while Leicester may have really aspired to Mary's hand, the Duke of Norfolk having been brought forward by the

Roman Catholics, he is constrained to withdraw and abandon his claim, entering with seeming, but only seeming zeal, into Norfolk's plans to gain the Scottish Queen. Briefly, such were the opinions placed before the Duke of Alva, for the after perusal and consideration of the King of Spain, by his various agents in 1569.

Early in 1570 the Regent Murray was assassinated, being succeeded by the Earl of Lennox, he to be in his turn murdered the year after. Scotland is then represented by Alva's agents to be in utter confusion, as indeed that country was. They relate that the Lords Huntly and Maxwell are at the head of Mary's party, all her supporters clamouring for the sudden descent of a Spanish force: and we learn that so firmly was the expectation of foreign aid in this direction maintained, that grave discussions had been held as to which port would be the most suitable at which to debark the Spanish forces. Huntly, then at Aberdeen, the agents allege—and it will presently be shown their allegations were true—recommended the port of Montrose for the purpose, but his recommendation met with but scant consideration or support, for it was in the mind of a numerous contingent of Mary's adherents that the stout castle of Dumbarton being held by her, a preferable policy would be to occupy the Clyde upon which Dumbarton Castle stood, and also the Forth. A landing could therefore be readily effected at any time without difficulty.

The private agents in Scotland of the Duke of Alva next proceed to describe the customs and habits of the lower classes of the population in-

habiting such portions of the northern parts of the country into which they had dared or been enabled to penetrate. Their description is brief, possibly accurate enough, but certainly uncomplimentary; maybe they were prejudiced, or judged only from a distance. The people, they related, were savages for the most part, dwelling high up in the mountains, yielding service to none, save to their own chieftains, unto whom they were bound to give ten days' free but armed service when summoned by them to the field; their lower limbs were bare, but the body covered with coats of mail descending to the knees, while for all weapons they had but hand-bows and two-handed swords; lastly, they were "infected in religion," whatever that may imply,—possibly it meant of the Reformed faith. These people, said the agents, were of rough exterior and habit, jealous of foreigners, and by no means over-anxious for a too numerous force to co-operate with them, for, while they were by no means oblivious of the need for such aid, they were of opinion that pecuniary assistance was a far greater necessity, and this they most earnestly implored. Possibly as a result of these reports, and also in pursuance of the policy laid down both by the King of Spain and the Duke of Alva, the troops at one time half promised, and so eagerly looked for by many of Mary's adherents, were never sent, the only assistance given being a sum of 10,000 crowns sent by the Spanish King for distribution among the people, a subsidy he acknowledges having made in a communication to Queen Mary, to which I shall later on have to refer. Such was the con-

tribution of the crafty King who was playing fast and loose with both sides; a bribe of 10,000 crowns for distribution among the poorer adherents who were, if any rising was attempted, to be the victims as they already were the puppets of those desirous of effecting their varied political, selfish, or ambitious schemes, all of them dependent upon the centre figure, Queen Mary.

We now come to a letter written from Madrid by Philip II to the Duke of Alva, dated January, 1571. The King acknowledges the several reports transmitted to him, but urges great caution upon the Duke. He must act with due deliberation and temporise, setting forth among other reasons for these directions his conviction that Lord Seton, Mary's representative, was unworthy of trust so far as his relations with Spain were concerned, for he credited him with being actually in the pay of the French King. Further, hints King Philip II, too close an intimacy existed betwixt Lord Seton and the Countess of Northumberland, the nature of which, however, does not transpire. It would seem somewhat strange, and needless as strange, to urge caution upon the cruel and wily Duke of Alva, who, it will be seen shortly, makes a similar recommendation to the King, his master.

At this time the question of the succession to the English throne was being hotly debated in Parliament, and rumours, say the trusted agents of the Duke of Alva, were being industriously spread throughout England as to possible dangers that might ensue should Elizabeth die, and a rising in Mary's favour take place, or should she effect her

escape; and in connection with this last, Lord Dacre, an intimate friend of Lord Seton, is alleged to be most active in fanning the flame in Northumberland. But Alva, ever on the alert, despises these rumours, and sends despatches to Spain, to the effect that for Mary to escape from England would be well-nigh impossible. Such an undertaking, he tells his royal master, would be beset by almost if not quite insuperable difficulties, and such a notion is not to be for a single moment entertained. All the same, it should not be overlooked that Matthias, King of Hungary, Queen Mary of England, nay, even Elizabeth, present ruler of that land, came to their thrones while under ward, and he was of opinion that Mary would have a far better chance of succeeding to the throne of England, even while a prisoner in that country, than if she were at liberty in a foreign land—wherefore, caution! The artful policy of the Duke is exposed in his brief recommendation to the Spanish monarch which concludes this communication: "In answer to English despatches, avoid a rupture with Elizabeth and England, yet do not drive Mary to despair,"—the sense if not the text of the instructions previously received by him from King Philip —"Temporise, act with deliberation."

At this time most sedulous inquiries were being prosecuted in order, if possible, to ascertain in what direction were affected the nobility and leading personages towards the rival Queens, and these not alone by the Spanish agents, but by both parties in England and in Scotland. The report of the Earl of Huntly on the state of Scotland is met

with among this set of documents, and contains many curious and interesting particulars, in divers passages corroborating the statements made to the Duke of Alva by his spies already cited. Huntly reports as follows:

State of Parties.

The Earls of Chatelherault, (Orkney), Huntly, Atholl, Cassilis, Argyle, Crawford, and Sutherland. "For Mary."

Lennox, the younger Angus, Glencairn, Morton, Mar, and Buchan; but the latter, it is said, "by marriage only," a comment I am unable to account for. These "for the rebels."

The neutrals, continues Huntly, are—Errol, Rothes, Montrose, Menteith (Monthey), Mareschal, Montgomery (Mungumri), and Caithness.

"Lords upon the Queen's side"—Hume (at present), Ogilvie, Boyd, Fleming, Livingstone, Maxwell, Herries, Drummond, Hay, Somerville, Seton, Lovat (at present), Creichton (a ward), Oliphant, and Elphinstone.

"For the rebels"—Ruthven, Ochiltree, Semple (a prisoner), Methven (Muffane), Cathcart, Lindsay, Glamys, and St. John of Dundee.

Indifferent or partially disposed towards the rebels—Carlisle (?), Gray, Saltoun, Borthwick (Borthilk), (Soirbois,) Inchkeith (Enerinceith), Sinclair (Syncle). Some of these names are so indifferently spelt as to be almost past recognition; others seem to have been written phonetically.

Saving two bishops only, Caithness and Orkney, says the Earl of Huntly, all are for the Queen,

Abbots and Priors pretty evenly divided. As regards fortified places, Edinburgh Castle is held for and at present declares for the Queen, and in any event will in no way assist the rebels; Dumbarton Castle is loyally hers, but Stirling is held by and for the rebels. He alludes to no other castles or strongholds, and it may be assumed with sufficient safety that they were maintained in the cause their respective owners declared for. The towns, continues the Earl's statement, for the most part were favorably affected towards the rebels, and disposed to aid them, but two only were walled and of appreciable strength, viz. Edinburgh and St. John's (St. Johnston's, Dundee). On the contrary, the borders or frontiers were well affected towards the Queen, this being attributable in the main to their resentment at numerous injuries inflicted upon them by the English.

Huntly now proposes that, in aid of the proposed rising, Spain would do well in sending money to replenish the almost if not quite empty treasury, and secure men for the campaign. Spain is also invited to send at the very least three or four thousand men, whereof 1000 reyters or horsemen, together with not less than 1500 hackbutiers, or arquebusiers, the remainder pikemen. For arms and equipages should also be furnished 1500 hacquebouses, 3000 pikes with 1000 corslets; of artillery six cannon and their gear, as bastards and field pieces; and, to complete the tale of this modest demand for aid in the proposed rising of the people coupled with an invasion of Scotland by Spain, a large supply of "powder of all sorts" is requested,

accompanied by the Earl's frank admission, "There is none in Scotland."

Huntly's selection of Montrose, as related by the spies, is here plainly set forth by himself before the Duke of Alva, and described as a most eligible port for the Spanish debarcation. Borthwick Brae he advises should be occupied, for Lord de Cray (Gray) would readily yield it on request; and while the statement is made that the English would be well-nigh powerless beyond the Forth, the confidence of Mary's adherents is exhibited in the calculation that 10,000 Scots would join with the Spanish forces and carry all before them. These 10,000 men, it may be assumed, are represented by that number referred to later on by Huntly, who continues, that when the Spanish forces had once landed, all the industrious classes would readily give their adhesion to the Queen's party, while for himself he was prepared to furnish 10,000 men, horse and foot, chiefly armed with pikes and "animis"—a word I have been unable to ascertain the meaning of,—the only suggestion I have to offer is that it may have been another description of pike.

Very little artillery or ammunition is in his possession, adds Huntly, who offers a multitude of suggestions respecting the conduct of the expedition, which are now of little interest. While the system of espionage I have already noticed was being pursued in Scotland, together with Huntly's negotiations, England was fraught also with projects and intrigues, Mary's party in the latter country advocating her restoration to freedom upon certain conditions I need not repeat here, saving

the suggestion of her divorce from Bothwell and marriage with an English noble. As before related, Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England, was suggested as likely best to fulfil the necessary requirements calculated to give assurance for future peaceful rule. Mary assented both to the divorce and subsequent marriage, "for the good of her country."

The documents from which I quote, having been prepared between 1569 and 1571, that is during the lifetime of the Duke of Norfolk, are found to contradict the statements of many later writers respecting the religion professed by the Duke. Udall, who wrote the "Life and Death of Mary Queen of Scots" published in 1624, that is nearly forty years after her execution, and more than fifty after that of the Duke of Norfolk, states that he was brought up in the Protestant religion. Hume is somewhat more cautious, implying this without making the actual statement, as has been frequently attributed to him. What Hume says is this: the Duke of Norfolk's grandfather and father were leaders of the Catholics, but he had been educated among the Reformers, and was sincerely devoted to their principles. Our contemporary MS., however, emphatically states that he held the Romish faith, and as a contemporary statement this should be received with considerable weight in favour of its acceptation, being made without prejudice, and when readily to be verified or contradicted. "The Duke of Norfolk," it precisely states, "was bred and educated in the Catholic religion under a holy and virtuous person, one

Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, where he was well instructed in the same; his principal friends and advisers, and especially his servants, are of the Catholic religion." These facts, indeed, are set forth as the causes for the hostility of the Protestants and more especially of the Puritans towards him and his proposed marriage. Elizabeth's own reasons for objecting to it are well known, and in order to frustrate the proposed scheme if possible, the correspondence between Mary and Norfolk was carefully watched for with a view to its examination and suppression. Yet many letters unquestionably escaped the ordeal and reached their destination. Mary, we are told, wrote in cipher; Norfolk, doubtless, would do the same; but Udall mentions that his correspondence was conveyed in ale bottles—a somewhat risky method unless a cipher was employed also. Mary's appeal to the "Pope and all Christian princes" certainly reached its destination,—it is mentioned in our MSS., as is also the fact of the Duke of Alva instructing an envoy, the Sieur Hallwyn de Swenningham, sent on a mission to England respecting a seizure of ships, to offer the mediation of the Spanish King in settling the differences between Elizabeth and Mary should the former make reference to the subject. The mode of settlement contemplated is not, however, set forth.

The MSS. now introduce upon the scene Rudolphi the Florentine, who, says Udall most quaintly, "had used much trafficke and merchandise at London fifteen yeares." This person is said to have conducted the correspondence between the

English Catholic nobility and the Papal Court, and to have been in high favour with Pius V, the Pope whose celebrated Bull, Sentence Declaratorie, or excommunication against Queen Elizabeth, it will be remembered was nailed by one Felton upon the Bishop of London's door in the night-time, and for which treasonable act he was executed.

With all his credit at Rome, Rudolphi does not appear to have been thoroughly trusted elsewhere, nor his character held above suspicion, as will be seen shortly. On the present occasion he was journeying towards Rome, although later on Philip II writes as if in daily expectation of his appearance at Madrid—possibly the bearer of a missive from the Pope to the Spanish King,—for he seems to have been greatly occupied in carrying despatches or reports to various Courts.

In May, 1571, then, he appears, according to the MSS., before the Duke of Alva at Brussels, disclosing to him on behalf, as he says, of the Duke of Norfolk, particulars of a plot alleged to have been conceived by Queen Mary and the Duke, together with a complete list of names, and particulars relating to the parties to the said plot, their titles and descriptions. The list is a remarkable one, and by whomsoever prepared shows a considerable familiarity with the opinions held by many of the persons named; it also seems to bear the stamp of veracity, and to be of great apparent accuracy so far as individuals are concerned; but on critical examination is found to relate rather to circumstances dating from the spring of 1569 than to May, 1571, the date of Rudolphi's appearance at Brussels, as

also of the report of his statements then made to the Duke of Alva, and by him transmitted to the King and Council of Spain.

Alva's despatches accompanying these, clearly indicate that he gave but little credit to the revelations of this self-declared messenger from the Duke of Norfolk, nor indeed to the doubtful conspiracy of the latter. The list produced by Rudolphi comprised the names of no less than sixty-three powerful nobles, forty-one pledged to the alleged conspiracy, with seventeen neutral and but five hostile. He makes no statement as to whether all of these had been entrusted with full details of this conspiracy, but the particulars he laid before the Duke of Alva were these:

That the marriage of Mary with the Duke of Norfolk was to be secretly solemnised, after which the Duke proposed with the assistance of his friends, of whom he reckoned many in different quarters of England, to seize the person of the Queen of England and the Tower of London, and at the same time to set the Queen of Scotland at liberty. How the marriage of two persons in custody at different places was to be secretly effected he omits to state. Rudolphi himself admits that the Duke was a prisoner in ward, and describes him as having no fear, even with the failure of the previous attempt of the Earls of Westmoreland and Northumberland as a warning. This being represented to the Duke, continues the Florentine, he replied with caution, that his party expected so well to manage their affairs that there should be no failure, as had happened to those Earls in consequence of

their own mistaken measures. . . . That as for being in ward, he could escape whenever he chose; and that he had not yet had his liberty given to him, because the Queen did not wish for him to be present at the meeting of the Estates, which is called "le Parlemen."

Also, that it was now seen the enterprise could not be successfully executed without the support and assistance of some powerful prince, with the sanction of our Father the Pope; and they therefore sought the King of Spain as the only person of greatness, power, and love, and zeal for the holy religion, and with just cause of resentment against the Queen of England, to whom they could look for the help they desired. This was his (Rudolphi's) mission to the Pope and the King, and also to make advances to the Ambassador of Portugal. He further endeavoured to pique the Spanish interests by speaking of the King of France's promise to send a thousand soldiers and 4000 crowns a month into Scotland to succour the Queen.

Alva interrogating him as to the power possessed by the Duke of Norfolk, and what he wished the king to do, he replied that the Duke of Norfolk would be strong enough in his country to sustain for forty days against all those who might try to injure him in England, while waiting for the Spanish co-operation; that he wanted 6000 harquebusiers under some good leader; that he had ports enough in his own country to receive them, and which were opposite to Holland; that his country was one of the most fertile in all the kingdom; and that he gave the names of his adherents with the par-

ticulars of their feelings towards the cause; adding that the Queen of England would find herself so stayed, or hemmed in on all sides, that she would not know which way to turn.

An alarm on the side of Ireland is also suggested, if with but only 1000 men; and in after portions of the correspondence the Earl of Ormond is mentioned as a partisan of Mary's in that part of the kingdom. July or August is named as a fitting time, and the voyage of the Duke of Medina as a good cover for embarking the troops without exciting suspicion.

The Duke of Alva's speculations on this communication are curious and interesting. He suspects the messenger, and the nation to which he belongs; calls him a free talker, blabbing too much; likes the plan, but does not see his way to its successful issue; if it failed the King of Spain would be committed, and Elizabeth would move heaven and earth to revenge herself; she would marry the Duke of Anjou and throw herself into the arms of France, and then they would have England, France, and Germany as foes. In fact, it was the old political game of fast and loose; encourage the attempt, but avoid committing yourself.

The King's answer to this despatch dated the 14th of June acknowledges the importance of the negotiation and the necessity for keeping it secret on account of the danger to which its discovery would expose Queen Mary, the Duke of Norfolk, and others. And his Majesty adds:

"It was by you a very prudent consideration that matters with the Queen of England being in

the state they are at present, *it would not be convenient to us to make any movement*, which it is also my intention should not be done; but should it happen that such a case as you mention should take place, either the *natural death or other* of the said Queen, or her being in custody, it would appear to me as it does to you, that without farther consulting me, *the opportunity should not be lost*, as you well state. Though, however, considering the person of the said Rudolphi, and the nation to which he belongs, and the manner of his proceeding, and the other circumstances of the whole of his business (or negotiation), I do not, in truth, as you also well say, know what credit to give him in it, and whether there be not duplicity in it; but time will make us wise, and I think what you addressed to Rome is very right; and in conformity with your advice I thought it advisable to send away Cobham as soon as possible, and he is already gone, that he might not be here when the said Rudolphi may possibly arrive, which is expected from day to day. And it will be well that from time to time you give me an account of the success of the said negotiations, as you have hitherto been, very properly, used to do."

On the 8th of the following July (1571) the Duke sends a farther report to Madrid, which serves more and more to expose the wily diplomacy with which it was sought to entangle the unfortunate Mary. He describes the charge he gave to one named *Huntley** to inform her that, if she had not, as she wished, an open and constant correspondence

* An evident error in copying: it must be Hamilton.

with him, it was not owing to his not having her affairs in mind or his want of good inclinations towards her, but to her way of proceeding and the means she had taken with the Ministers whom she had lately employed as well in Flanders as elsewhere, and which he had not judged as tending to her advantage. He had therefore been obliged to be very circumspect, and could not advise freely with them. Yet he had assisted her by giving them the money as she had so willed it, "by satisfying those who made claims on her and otherwise, in what he was able without entering into matters in which these agents might have made ill profit to her disadvantage, before he had the means of disabusing her, and representing to her the inconveniences which might flow from her seeking support and not giving way to the measures in which her Ministers were endeavouring to engage her, of which the success might be such as not to leave her an hour's repose during the rest of her life. That it was important for her to understand that some who spoke fine words and promised much did not do it for the love of her, but for their own private objects." Then follow a repetition of the old assurances that the King of Spain contemplated no private interests, and only desired a peaceable arrangement, a restoration of quiet and good neighbourhood, that she might marry whom she pleased, &c. &c., always without prejudice to the Catholic religion.

It seems that Hamilton having conveyed this message to the prisoner, she sent back a holograph missive, in which she justified her sending Seton

(the party at whom Alva directed his suspicions), and offering to be guided in any alterations of such trusts by the Duke's advice. But sorely does the poor lady complain that, inasmuch as he (Alva) had not been willing to *do anything against her*, she felt greatly obliged to him; that often the right side might require aid, *innocence its advocate*, together with a proper interpretation of good intentions. She also acknowledges and thanks him for the money disbursed, without which her affairs would have been in danger of being lost. She appears to have seen clearly that the Spanish policy was to hold her in a degree of dependence, supply some pecuniary wants, promise contingent succour, so as to keep her from urging other powers to befriend her, and not to commit Spain in the quarrel until the game was quite, or all but, sure. To humour even this cold and calculating conduct she says, as Alva repeats, "that she sought aid for her country of Scotland from all Christian princes—that she would make complaint to all, but that she only made offers to One particularly if He pleased to accept them." She again repeats the leading points at issue, and pledges herself to be ruled by the opinions of the King of Spain, but entreats for *speedy succour* as absolutely necessary for the cause of God, her own, and her friends.

In return Alva justifies his mode of conduct; that his reservation with Seton was on account of his intimacy with the French Ambassador, speaking of him personally in terms of regard as zealous in her service, promising to be kind to

Hamilton and all others who are loyally employed and faithful to her.

The last of the documents I need quote contains a list of some of the friends to Mary's projected escape. They are as follows: Nortons, Mackenfields, Tempests, Swinburn, and Ratcliff, Leonard Dacre, brother of Lord Dacre, taking the leading part in this design, while Sir Thomas and Sir Edward Stanley, sons of the Earl of Derby, Sir Thomas Gerard, Mr. Rolstone, and other gentlemen went hand and heart with him. Hence, say the agents, the increased rigour now exercised towards the Queen and her servants.

Thus practically conclude the despatches and reports of the Duke of Alva to the King and Council of Spain. Rudolphi's plot came to nothing, Norfolk perished upon the scaffold, where fifteen years later he was followed by the Queen of Scots, victims almost as much, or more, as instigators of the conspiracies and party passions that terminated so sadly and so fatally for both.

It will be noticed that in this paper I not infrequently allude to already well-authenticated and absolutely historical events. Being in possession of fragmentary notes only, yet deeming them of sufficient novelty to warrant me in presenting them for consideration, I found myself constrained to employ a few historical links in order to complete the chain, and render my account somewhat more intelligible.

I have in conclusion to repeat, that this account is based principally upon the authority of transcripts from original documents found by myself among the

Archives of the Royal Society of Literature, so that whatever may be my individual impression respecting their authenticity, it is obviously impossible for me to guarantee the same without having previously submitted the original MSS. to a crucial examination; this, up to the present time, I have not been able to do.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE LITERARY STYLE OF ENGLISH LAWYERS.

BY E. W. BRABROOK, ESQ., F.S.A., PRES.A.I., V.P.R.S.L.

[Read June 26th, 1895.]

THE perfection of literary style is that which is unconscious. Where a writer uses every expression in a fixed and determinate sense, seeks to arrange every member of his sentences in its strict logical order, avoids every figurative illustration or meretricious embellishment of his statements, goes straight to his point, and says what he has to say in the briefest and most direct terms, he ought to arrive unconsciously at the perfection of style. Just as a building in which every stone is in its right place, and every member of the structure subserves an evident purpose, and carries out that purpose in the best and most direct manner, is the perfection of architectural style, and pleases the cultivated and judicious eye more than one which is overloaded with ornament and crowded with laboured and purposeless decoration, so is it with literature. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. In legal documents, conveyances, statutes, text-books, judgments, and the like we shall not find, and shall not expect to find, any eloquence or beauty of style that is not of this unconscious character. In legal arguments

and addresses to juries, especially in cases where appeals to the passions of mankind are involved, we shall find, as we expect to find, that laboured eloquence and that planned and calculated rhetoric which succeed in their object of impressing the minds of those to whom they are addressed, but do not create lasting monuments of literary beauty.

The profession of the law has always, from the nature of things, called to its front ranks the cleverest men of the time. If the leaders of the Bar have not always or, perhaps, ever been the greatest and most profoundly learned of the lawyers of their day, they have been at least men skilled in dialectic, able to shoulder their way to the front in the conflicts of life, ready of utterance, and possessed of all the arts of persuasion and the qualities that give a man influence over his fellows. By the side of these leaders there have been the men, probably of more learning, who have been engaged in their chambers in the quiet work of settling documents upon which large interests are to depend, and to whose labours we are to look for examples of that unconscious perfection of style of which I have spoken. Shall we find them? and if not, why not? That is the problem which I propose briefly to submit to the Society to-night.

The first observation to be made is that in this respect there has been a distinct decadence and deterioration as time has gone on. The ancient deeds, such as may be found in Kemble's *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, were far more brief and to the point than the modern conveyances. The Palæographical Society has distributed among its

members fac-similes of some of these, which I may cite as specimens. A charter of the year 759, Add. Ch. 19789 in the British Museum, grants land in Onford, in the county of Worcester, from the three reguli of the Wiccas, to Abbot Headda. The size of this important conveyance is exactly 7 inches by 6. Even in these dimensions it is not altogether free from redundancy. It begins with a pious exordium: "In nomine Domini Nostri Jesu Christi Salvatoris." It then states the religious consideration moving the three brothers, with the permission of King Offa, to make the grant. "Nihil intulimus in hunc mundum verum nec auferre quid possumus idcirco terrenis ac caducis æterna et cœlestis patriæ præmia mercanda sunt quapropter cum licentiâ et permissione piissimi regis Offan Merciorum, nos tres germani uno patre editi Eanberht atque Uhctred, necnon et Aldred pretio redemptionis animæ nostræ non ignorantes in futuro prodesse. Si quid Christi membris libenter inpendimus." Then follow the words of donation: "Donavimus tibi Headda abbati terram juris nostri decem cassatorum æt onnan forda confiniæ tamen ejusdem terræ ab australi plaga Wisleag, ab occidente Rindburna, a septentrionale Meosgelegeo, ab oriente vero Onnanduun cum campis sylvis pratis pascuis cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus." In these last words creeps out a trace of the vice of enumeration, of which the modern lawyer is so guilty. Then come clauses corresponding to the covenants for quiet enjoyment and warranties of title with which we are familiar, and a still more awful sanction: "Quod si quis præsumserit in magno

vel in modico inrumpere, sit separatus ab omni societate Christianorum et in examine districti justique judicis præsumtionis suæ pænam incurrat." Then follow the testification and the date. The deed is signed with the sign of the holy cross by Offa, King of the Mercians, by the three reguli who are the grantors, by Milred the bishop, by three abbots and five other witnesses. Another grant, more towards the close of the eighth century, by Offa himself to Æthelmund of land in Westbury, is comprised within the space of 5 inches by 4½. The religious preamble somewhat differs from that in the former case, and is preceded by a cross and the chi-rho: "In nomine summi Tonantis qui est Deus benedictus in sæcula, Amen. Regibus potentibus et hujus sæculi divitibus cum fallacibus istius lugubri mundi substantiis quæ omnia sicut umbra evanescunt, æternæ vitæ præmia mercanda sunt. Quapropter ego Offa rex a rege regnum constitutus terram lv cassatorum in provincia Hwicciorum ubi nominatur Westburg, prope flumen qui dicitur Aben, Æthelmundo fideli meo ministro pro ereptione animæ meæ in libertatem perpetuam sub hac conditione libens concedo, ita ut ab omni tributo parvo vel majore publicalium rerum et a cunctis operibus vel regis vel principis sit in perpetuum libera, præter expeditionalibus causis et pontum structionum et arcium munimentum quod omni populo necesse est ab eo opere nullum excussatum esse. Scripta est autem hæc libertatis cartula ab universo concilio synodali in loco celeberrimo qui nuncupatur Clobeshoas. Quorum signa et nomina infra tenentur." That is the whole of

the deed, and I have ventured to quote it at length because it appears to me to be a strong case in support of what I have said as to the literary charm of brevity and directness, and a striking contrast to the lengthy deeds now employed for the conveyance of much less important properties.

The same observation applies to the statutes of the realm. Originally all the laws enacted at a single Parliament were comprised under one statute, having several heads or chapters. Each chapter was rarely longer than a single section of a modern Act of Parliament, and the whole statute was shorter than many single Acts of Parliament now are. The expression is still retained, for where two sessions of Parliament occur in a single year, the enactments of the first are distinguished as Statute 1, and those of the second as Statute 2; but in ordinary language, when we speak of a statute, we refer to a single Act, and not to all the Acts of a session. Take, for an example of an early enactment, that of the 23rd Edw. I.:—"Concerning prisoners which break prison, our Lord the King willeth and commandeth that none from henceforth that breaketh prison shall have judgment of life or member for breaking of prison only, except the cause for which he was taken and imprisoned did require such judgment, if he had been convicted thereupon according to the law and custom of the realm, albeit in times past it hath been used otherwise." Here is a merciful amendment of the law,—called for, no doubt, by excellent reasons, expressed in apt and terse language in the year 1296. After 530 years the legislature was moved to make further

provision, and it enacted "that every person convicted of any felony for which no punishment hath been or hereafter may be specially provided shall be *deemed* to be punishable under this Act; and shall be liable, at the discretion of the Court, to be transported beyond the seas for the term of seven years, or to be imprisoned for any term not exceeding two years; and if a male, to be once, twice, or thrice publicly or privately whipped, if the Court shall so think fit, in addition to such imprisonment." The English of this enactment is on a par with its humanity and justice; and it would do one good to see the draftsman once, twice, or thrice publicly or privately whipped. By 1857 transportation had to be abolished, and this was effected by an Act still more tortuous and involved in its language. The literary structure of Acts of Parliament has gradually become worse and worse. Of late there has been a slight change for the better; though the best efforts of the draftsman are often defeated by the amendments proposed by amateur legislators in the passage of a Bill through the two Houses.

What are the causes of this decadence of style in legal documents? One cause, as we think, lies in the peculiarity of the English system of case law. A set of facts is presented to the decision of the judges. The case is carried to the Court of Appeal. The Court decides that upon those facts the right lies with one party or the other. That decision is binding on all Courts of first instance. A case arises in which the facts are similar, but not the same. The judge of first instance is of opinion

that the application to such facts of the previous decision of the Court of Appeal would produce injustice. He therefore applies his mind to distinguish the facts in the case before him from those in the decided case, and to deduce from that distinction a difference in principle which will enable him to satisfy his judicial conscience without directly infringing the decision by which he is bound. As facts are innumerable and principles few, this leads to an ever-growing nicety and complexity of definition, to the adoption of forced and artificial meanings of words, and to a gradual corruption of style. Another and perhaps more potent cause lies in the system by which the framers of legal documents used to be, and still sometimes are, remunerated in proportion to the length of the documents they draw. To this is due the constant repetition of such a phrase as "his heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns," and a hundred other extensions of the several members of a sentence which are wholly unnecessary, and have not even the redeeming feature of vain decorations that in some eyes they may be beautiful. Even the authors of these appalling documents are not able to fall in love with their work, though they sometimes claim for it the credit of infinite skill.

The language in which lawyers formerly wrote had also had its effects upon their style. The work called Britton is the first treatise on English law written in French, the language of the Court, which afterwards degenerated into the curious language known as Norman French or Law French. It was written late in the thirteenth century.

I quote a sentence from Mr. F. M. Nichols's translation, bearing on the question of "Breach of Prison," which has been already before us. The book is written in the name of King Edward I:—"We will that a prison be accounted a place limited by us within certain bounds for the keeping of the bodies of men, which bounds we forbid on pain of death anyone to pass with a felonious intent of escaping; and if anyone having such intent is taken, and is attainted of compassing that felonious intent, let him receive judgment of death" (si voloms nous qe il eyt jugement de la mort).

Littleton, whose treatise on Tenures was written in the reign of Edward IV, late in the fifteenth century, wrote in French, but the language had already begun to suffer deterioration. His work forms the foundation of the great work of Lord Coke, who gives an excellent reason for this degeneration of our law French. He says, "True it is that our books of reports and statutes in ancient times were written in such French as in those times was commonly spoken and written by the French themselves; but this kind of French that our author hath used is most commonly written and read and very rarely spoken, and therefore cannot be either pure or well pronounced." With the conservatism natural to him, however, Coke urges that "the change thereof (having been so long customed) should be without any profit, but not without great danger and difficulty; for so many ancient terms and words drawn from that legal French are grown to be *vocabula artis*, vocables of art, so apt and significant to express the true

sense of the laws, and are so woven in the laws themselves, as it is in a manner impossible to change them, neither ought legal terms to be changed." French accordingly remained the language of the Courts of law, and got more and more hopelessly corrupt till the time of the Commonwealth, when the adoption of the English language in pleadings in the Courts was one of a vast number of wholesome reforms introduced into the practice of the law.

With the Restoration, however, all the old abuses sprang up again, and had a new lease of life, but fortunately (in this case at least) not a long one. The people who had tasted the blessings of legal reform were not likely to allow their joy at having their most religious and gracious King Charles II among them again to blind them to the benefits his illustrious predecessor had won for them. If there is one place more than another where a statue of Cromwell would be a fitting ornament, it is the High Court of Justice.

Here is a specimen, from Siderfin's reports, of the monstrous jargon which this blessed Restoration galvanised into a brief semblance of life. It is a description of the proceedings when fourteen serjeants were created in the year 1660. "Touts ceux le tierce jour de cest Terme count in le Inner Temple Hall (pur ceo que les Chiefe Justices fueront de ceste meason) et de ceo lieu ils fueront accompany al Common Bank (lou le Chancellor et touts les Justices et Barons fueront adonque seant en cest Court) ove plusors de touts les Inns de Court et Chancery la vaant devant eux, circa 200 servants

en party coloured liveries, et tous les Officers des Courts et les Butlers des Societies en party coloured gowns, et puis le gent', et immediatement devant les novel serjeants la vaeront trois chivalers en party coloured gowns, videlicet, Sir-Carew, marshall de leur feast, Sir Francis Clarke, steward, et Sir John Maynard, controuler."

There is much to admire in the patriotic eloquence of the great lawyers of the past. A fine example of this is given in the treatise of Sir John Fortescue, Chief Justice, written in English about 1475, 'On the Governance of England.' "There beth two kinds of kingdoms, of the which that one is a lordship called in Latin dominium regale, and that other is called dominium politicum et regale. And they diversen in that the first king may rule his people by such laws as he makyth himself, and therefore he may set upon them tayles and other impositions, such as he wol hymself, without their assent. The second king may not rule his people by other laws than such as they assenten unto, and therefore he may set upon them non impositions without their own assent." After describing, by the example of France, the oppression by the king, and poverty and weakness of the people, which are the fruits of jus regale, he says: "yf the realme of Englande, which is an Ile, and therefore may not lightly get succour of other lands, were ruled under such a law and under such a prince, it would then be a prey to all other nations that would conquer, rob, or devour it. . . But, blessed be God, this land is ruled under a better law, and therefore the people thereof be not in such penury, nor thereby hurt in their persons,

but they beth welthe, and have all things necessary to the sustenance of nature. Wherefore they ben myghty and able to resist the adversaries of this realme, and to beete other reaumes that do or wolde do them wrong. Lo, this is the fruit of jus politicum et regale, under which we live."

As a specimen of Lord Coke's literary style, I may quote his epilogue upon the completion of his Institutes: "Whilst we were in hand with these four parts of the Institutes, we often having occasion to go into the city, and from thence into the country, did in some sort envy the state of the honest plowman and other mechanics; for the one when he was at his work would merrily sing, and the plowman whistle some self-pleasing tune, and yet their work both proceeded and succeeded; but he that takes upon him to write doth captivate all the faculties and powers both of his mind and body, and must be only intentive to that which he collecteth, without any expression of joy or cheerfulness, whilst he is in his work."

Coke's great contemporary, Bacon, wrote a small treatise on the maxims of the law (which was not published till after his death), and left some other legal manuscripts. In the introduction to his famous reading at Gray's Inn on the Statute of Uses, he describes it as "a law whereupon the inheritances of this realm are tossed at this day as upon a sea, in such sort that it is hard to say which bark will sink, and which will get to the haven; that is to say, what assurances will stand good and what will not. Neither is this any lack or default in the pilots, the grave and learned judges; but the tides and currents

of received errors and unwarranted and abusive experience have been so strong as they were not able to keep a right course according to the law."

The writer who has, in the most eminent degree, wedded to the severe study of the law the graces of literary style is undoubtedly Sir William Blackstone, whose appointment as Vinerian Professor at Oxford in 1758 led to the delivery of those famous lectures on the laws of England which are the foundation of his celebrated Commentaries. He, like most of the earlier lawyers, waxed eloquent in his admiration of the common law as the perfection of reason. "What is not reason is not law; and it hath been an ancient observation in the laws of England, that whenever a standing rule of law, of which the reason perhaps could not be remembered or discerned, hath been wantonly broken in upon by statutes or new resolutions, the wisdom of the rule hath in the end appeared from the inconveniences that have followed the innovation." Both he, and Coke before him, however, were sensible of the mischiefs that arise, as I have endeavoured to show, from our system of legislation. "The common law of England" (he says) "has fared like other venerable edifices of antiquity, which rash and unexperienced workmen have ventured to new dress and refine, with all the rage of modern improvement. Hence frequently its symmetry has been destroyed, its proportions distorted, and its majestic simplicity exchanged for specious embellishments and fantastic novelties. For, to say the truth, almost all the perplexed questions, almost all the niceties, intricacies, and delays (which have sometimes disgraced

the English as well as other courts of justice) owe their original, not to the common law itself, but to innovations that have been made in it by Acts of Parliament 'overladen (as Sir Edward Coke expresses it) with provisoes and additions, and many times on a sudden penned or corrected by men of none or very little judgment in law.' This great and well-experienced judge declares that in all his time he never knew two questions made upon rights merely depending upon the common law; and warmly laments the confusion introduced by ill-judging and unlearned legislators. 'But if,' he subjoins, 'Acts of Parliament were, after the old fashion, penned by such only as perfectly knew what the common law was before the making of any Act of Parliament concerning that matter, as also how far forth former statutes had provided remedy for former mischiefs and defects discovered by experience; then should very few questions in law arise, and the learned should not so often and so much perplex their heads to make atonement and peace, by construction of law, between insensible and disagreeing words, sentences, and provisoes, as they now do.'"

The last branch of legal literature, that embodied in the judgments of the Courts, consists of the carefully prepared sentences of able and profound thinkers, and ought to afford us choice specimens of literary style; but these are not so abundant as might be expected. The system of case law, to which I have already referred, tends to deprive the judges of many opportunities of basing their judgments on broad and general declarations of principle, and leads them to apply their intellects to those

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nice distinctions between case and case which rather minister occasion for ingenious dialectic than for dignified and impressive eloquence. Some of our great lawyers have, however, risen by the force of their genius above these difficulties, and have left us judgments which are memorable for literary skill as well as for sound reason.

In very early times judgments were preceded by statements of the facts and reasons upon which they were founded, as we may see from the excellent work of Sir F. Pollock and Professor Maitland, on the 'History of the Law before the time of Edward the First.' Those learned authors remark with justice on the permanence of the work of the men of Bracton's time, who (as they say) were penning writs that would run in the name of kingless commonwealths on the other side of the Atlantic:—they were making right and wrong for us and our children.

In the old year-books the judgments are recorded in brief and technical language, and give us few indications of the literary style of the judges. In 12 Edward III, "Spigurnel found that an infant of ten years of age killed his companion and concealed him, and he caused him to be hanged, because, by the concealment, he showed that he knew how to distinguish between evil and good (qil savoit distinguer et mal de bien). And so malice makes up for age (et ideo malitia supplet ætatem)." You will observe the curious transition from Norman-French to Latin. The judges of that day were addicted to interposing anecdotes from the bench more or less pertinent to the cases before them, and the

reporters not unfrequently record these. In a case where the plaintiff was alleged to be an outlaw, "Scot related how a man once brought an assize before justices at York, and the tenants pleaded that he was outlawed for a felony, and had, by forgetfulness, left his charter (of pardon) at his inn, and he was immediately arraigned; and because the Chancery was at York, he vouched the record of his charter in the Chancery; and if he had not been at York he would have gone on pilgrimage to Guaresmire." If we accept Mr. Pike's identification of this place with Knaresmire or Knavesmire, the place of execution at York, this is the judge's merry way of putting it that the man would have been hanged. "A grim kind of pleasantry," says Mr. Pike, "but quite intelligible and quite in accordance with the spirit of the age." Judges, or their reporters it may be, have always been famous for putting their meaning in plain and blunt language, as when Sir Heneage Finch, in the case of Sir Francis Hollis *v.* Sir Robert Carr, in 1676, said, "If a man covenants to do a thing that is not in his power, this Court will lay him by the heels" (Freeman's reports). On the other hand, some judgments are full of dignity, as, for example, that of Wilmot, C. J., in the case of Collins *v.* Blantern, 2 Wils. 341:

"This is a contract to tempt a man to transgress the law, to do that which is injurious to the community; it is void by the common law; and the reason why the common law says such contracts are void is for the public good; you shall not stipulate for iniquity. All writers upon our law agree in this—no polluted hand shall touch the pure fountains of justice."

I conclude with a specimen of a modern judgment which leaves nothing to be desired in point of perspicuity and clearness:

"One knows historically that from the earliest period when the Mortmain Acts were passed, various ingenious devices by learned persons were invented for the purpose of evading them. Money was left for the purpose of building a school, for example. It was money; and the object, that of building a school, was a very wholesome object, and a very proper one. Nevertheless the Courts saw through it, and as one cannot build a school without land, they held that to be within the Mortmain Act. I need not go through the long series of cases with which one is familiar, and the various ingenious devices that have been used from time to time to turn money, which it was always lawful to leave, into land, but in the year 1888 the Legislature consolidated the law on that subject. . . . [After explaining the provisions of the Act of 1888, the learned judge proceeded:] Then came the Act of 1891, which seems to me to have inverted the whole condition of things. The state of the law and the current of decisions had practically said, 'Do what you like, adopt whatever ingenious device you like, but if the money you are going to leave is to be turned into land, it shall be within the Mortmain Act.' In 1891 the Legislature appears to have determined to get rid of all these difficulties, and to allow persons to devise lands as they pleased for charitable purposes, but more effectually to get rid of the real objection, namely, the inalienability of land given to charity, by providing that while any one may make such a disposition as he pleases, when he has done it the land shall within twelve months be turned into personalty. . . . By that law it seems to me that all the argument directed against holding land in mortmain is gone. If that provision is properly administered, there is no holding of the land in a dead hand at all."

This is an extract from the judgment of the noble President of this Society in the case of *Forbes* v. *Hume*, delivered on the 22nd of January, 1895.

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